

Punch

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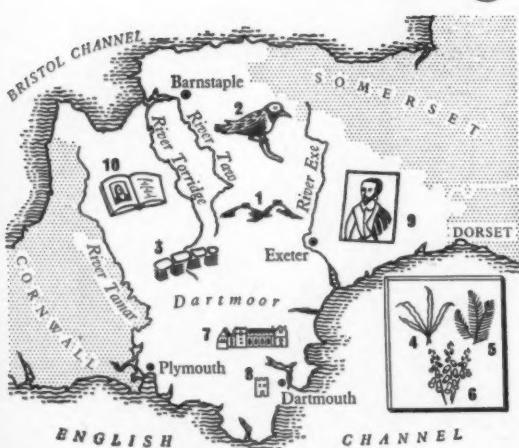


Smilby.



Shell guide to DEVONSHIRE

Painted by Thomas Swimmer



A county which is warm, fertile, damp, velvety — and rough. The tors of Dartmoor (1) — where a characteristic bird is the Ring Ouzel (2) — brokenly erupt above a richness of small fields and deep valleys. Clapper bridges (3), just wide enough for packhorses, survive across the rapid streams below the Moor. Ferns flourish, Hart's Tongue (4) and Male Fern (5); and in June Devonshire is a county of Foxgloves (6). As likely as not the cattle of the green fields will be Red Devons, whose milk yields rich Devonshire Cream. Orchards abound, giving apples for cider and the cider jar.

In South Devon the medieval Dartington Hall (7) is the hub of a unique research institute, concerned with farming, forestry, horticulture, music, education. Deep harbour inlets on the south coast guarded by little Tudor forts (8) are reminders of Devon's long naval importance. Of her famous men, here are two — Sir Walter Ralegh (1552-1618) (9), poet, historian, statesman, courtier, soldier, naval commander, who had "a wonderfull waking spirit" and was a man of "awfulness and ascendancy in his aspect over other mortalls"; and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) (10), the great poet of *Kubla Khan*, son of a Devonshire clergyman and grandson of a maker of Devon serge. Ralegh used Devonshire words in his poems; Coleridge spoke broad Devonshire all his life.

The "Shell Guide to Trees" is now published in book form by Phoenix House Ltd. at 7s. 6d. The Shell Guides to "Flowers of the Countryside", "Birds and Beasts", and "Fossils, Insects and Reptiles" are also available at 7s. 6d. each. On sale at bookshops and bookstalls. In U.S.A. from Transatlantic Art Inc., Hollywood by the sea, Florida, \$2.00.

YOU CAN BE SURE OF



The key to the Countryside

PUNCH

Vol. CCXXXVI No. 6190

APRIL 1 1959



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P

The London Charivari

NOBODY who has never been a schoolmaster can realize what a bore All Fool's Day can be. Thirteen warnings in quick succession that his shoe-laces were undone would have worn down even Lord Chesterfield, how much more a man who is giving back exam papers and learning he has added the marks up wrong. I was brought up on the tradition that hoaxes after mid-day count against the hoaxer, but this does not seem to be universally accepted; small boys regard it as a pussyfooting whittling away of Merrie England. I was once asked by a small boy whether he could stay up late because he still had three April Fools to catch. Outside this grimly waggish age-group, April 1st is pretty well dead. There is no commercial stimulus to keep it alive like Guy Fawkes Day, liveliest of secular feasts. Practical jokes still sell but they sell all the year round. Only an obsessed traditionalist would buy a tin ink-blot or worse simply to use annually. In these graver times, public attention has shifted to the end of the income-tax year.

Insult to Injury

A POLICE report on a man who went to hospital after falling through a skylight



into a building in Soho said that he might be charged with "breaking and entering." This seems a typical example

of preoccupation with the letter of the law.

Ah! Youth

TRUDGING through the great halls of London University the other day, looking for an audience I had been promised, I came upon a blackboard announcing a Protest March. The details were explicit: rally-point, destination, day, date and hour, and a note that official police permission had been received. But there was no information on what the marchers were invited to protest about.

Who? Me?

THERE is to be a road-safety campaign beginning in April which will plug the



slogan "Be a Better Driver." Every motorist hopes that every other motorist will try to take this advice at last.

—, You —

ONE of the disappointments of the tribunal inquiring into the case of the Thurso policemen was the reticence of *The Times* in reporting the obscene language. When Mr. Ben Parkin in the House of Commons quoted a constable as saying to him "Get those — out of here," *The Times* was alone among the newspapers in using the actual word (one that is not often heard in Parliamentary proceedings). But now it has retreated into the timidity



of its contemporaries, and offered nothing better than a _____ to cover everything except "Gestapo _____," where it reckoned the blank might safely be filled in. Though of course like everybody else it boldly printed the word "Huh," which appears to have overtones I never dreamed of.

Audience Participation Note

WHEN television stars played in a charity football match at Dagenham, fifteen thousand "screaming teenagers" turned up to occupy the seven thousand seats, the grandstand was endangered, children were crushed in the mud, women had their stockings torn off, loud-speakers couldn't be heard above the din, three hospitals were told to stand by for casualties, and twelve police cars, thirty ambulances and three fire brigades had to be called. Top TV men point out that this is something the live theatre can't do.

Solution to a Chaucerian Problem

"WHAN that Aprille . . ." April is Canterbury Pilgrims month. The mind jingles to think of their palfreys. The belly waxes fat at the very thought of their good cheer. The question has often been raised of how the rearward pilgrims heard what was going on in front: Kentish lanes are narrow and winding. But did they go by Kentish lanes? After all, it is not all that far from Southwark to Canterbury. Yet the Parson's Tale alone would have taken hours and hours of riding. My theory is that they got lost en route. One does not feel they were very strong on organization. Ambling across

Salisbury plain in an inward-facing bunch, no wonder they had endless time to pursue the most serpentine complexities of their tales. Probably it was not until somebody recognized York Minister that they awoke to their situation. Then they rode helter-skelter southwards and that is why the Tales were never completed.

You Pays Your Money . . .

WHAT makes front-page news is a matter of opinion. Who is to say that the *Daily Sketch* weren't right the other Tuesday, when Eisenhower talked of war, Suez was refought in the House, Khrushchev accused Nasser, Nyasaland bubbled, Cairo demonstrated, the middle of Ilford was burnt out and Heads of State were flying in all directions, to lead off boldly with "We were So Right—Our Racing Service is THE BEST."

Sancta Simplicitas

THE Reverend Mervyn Bazell, who has been annoying his parishioners by insisting on taking his dog to church with him, is presumably inspired by the example of Eddi of Manhood End. Eddi, as readers of Kipling will recall, conducted a service which attracted as congregation only an ox and an ass, and when he was mocked for doing so he replied in the ringing phrase "I dare not shut His chapel on such as care

to attend." The difference between his case and Mr. Bazell's is that he had no human congregation present. No doubt the ox and the ass gave him the most devotional attention; but if he had had a few village choirboys present too he might have found it hard to keep them in a properly reverent state of mind. We all know from the popular papers that the interests of animals should be put above the interests of the human race in most things nowadays, but I always thought until now that the Church was an exception to this rule.

Looking Ahead

ALREADY *The Times* cricket man is talking about the fight for the Ashes in 1961, the Postmaster-General is planning a 625-line television picture within "eight or ten years" and Mr. Watkinson has outlined his scheme for the long-term improvement of the roads. All this, with the news that Torquay will have to be looking for another source of water supply by 1990, is a great help in taking our minds off May 27 and Berlin.

Bumper to Bumper

AN increasingly common headline these days is "15 [or 16, or 17] VEHICLES IN PILE-UP." At first sight it seems easy to apportion the blame in a concertina-type collision, for if fifteen vehicles are travelling in the same direction and finish up in contact with each other, it would appear that fourteen drivers at least were driving without due care. The presence of fog is, of course, no excuse. The only man who was driving carefully, it might seem, was the sixteenth driver, who did not run into anybody. In practice, doubtless, half the drivers on these occasions plead that they stopped in time but were rammed and hurled into the car in front. The fun will start when the police start putting all fourteen drivers in court. Meanwhile, our thoughts should be with the insurance assessors. Or do they just shrug their shoulders and penalize everybody equally?

— MR. PUNCH

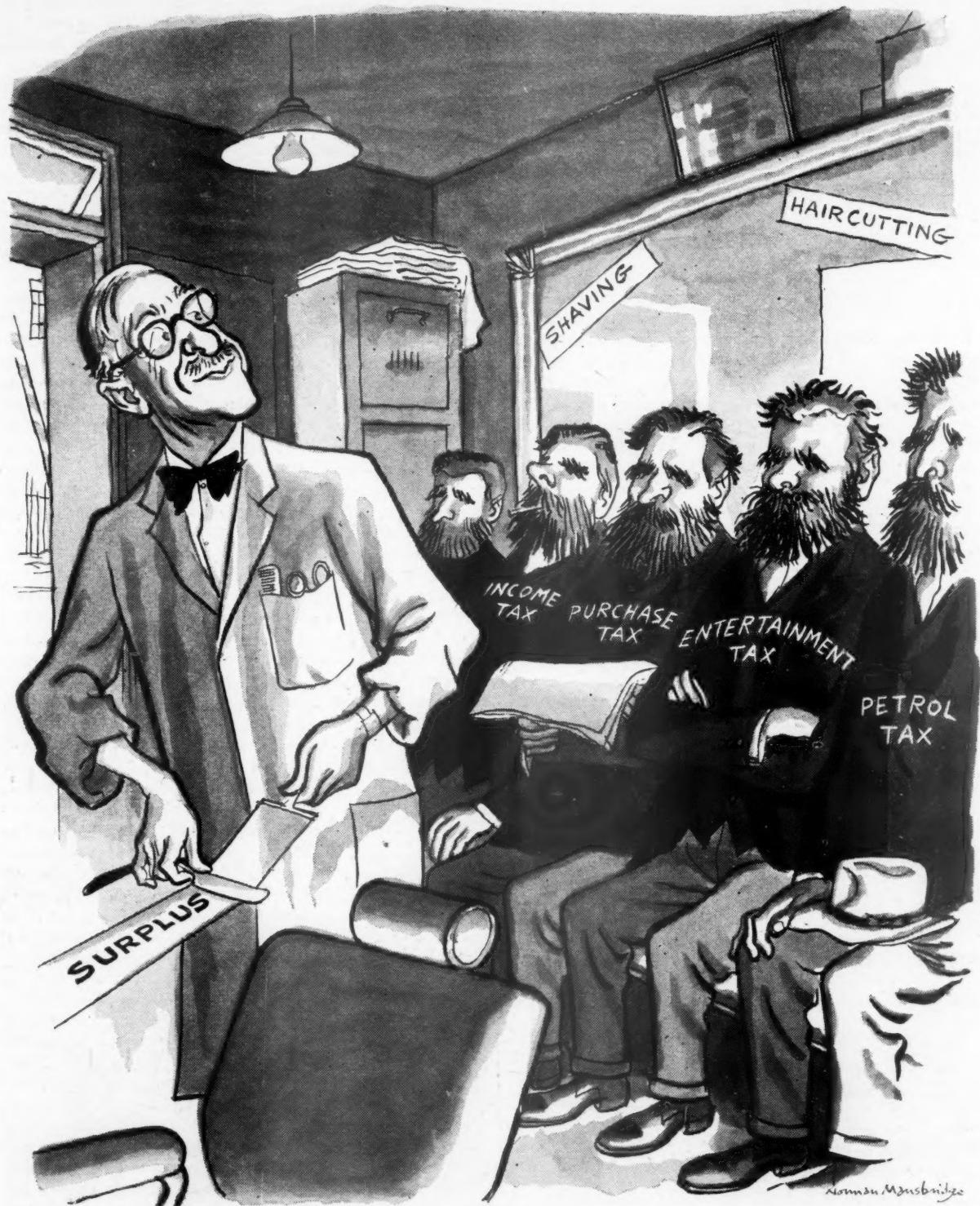


"Plain clothes duty to-night, Fred."

SPORTING PRINTS

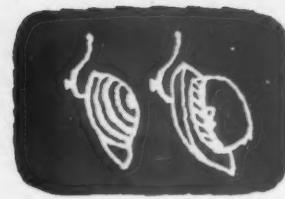
Next week's Hewison drawing
will be of

STANLEY MATTHEWS



"Who's first?"

CRADLE TO UNIVERSITY



7 What-to-Wear Guide

By JOHN TAYLOR

IT is their absurd school uniforms, not the inbreeding of their families, which sometimes succeed in presenting upper class children as the brand image of stupidity. Without any regard to the proportional differences between a child's and an adult's physique, the Little Man is crammed into replicas of his father's fashions until he looks just that—a little man.

A child's head accounts for about one quarter of his whole surface area. Only as he reaches maturity do the odds lengthen to about eight to one—yet these basic human fractions have only recently been acknowledged by the fashion artists; an indictment substantiated by study of the fashion plates of a century ago, when disregard of proportions coupled with the similarity

in the clothes of adult and child made any representation of children look not so much like children as like mature midgets.

Designers are at last acknowledging proportions, but none seems to be considering differing requirements; design is still based on a miniature rendering of grown-up styles; even though the long history of children's clothing serves to point the absurdity of the basis.

Every now and then somebody fights to bring children's clothes into line with adult fashion and, the change having been achieved, the school uniform falls again into an archaic deep-freeze and waits another century for another crack-pot.

Only a few weeks ago there was a plaintive cry for Norman Hartnell to

design a new girls'-school uniform—but this is no way to solve the problem. The whole trouble has been that children's clothes have always been based on the passing whims of the designers of their parents' styles. Hartnell himself recently suggested that last season's Line seemed to be influenced by girls' clothes because the Sack resembled nothing so much as a gym slip—but the truth is, of course, that the gym slip first evolved in a previous era which also went for the Sack line. Now the Sack has gone a full circle, it has returned to fashion to find schoolgirls wearing exactly the same clothes they were wearing when it went away.

The history of boy's clothes is even more foolish. Back in the eighteenth century Lord Spencer stood with his back too close to the fire one night and burned off his coat tails. A handy servant with a bucket of water cooled the flames and milord's bottom—but a star was born. The short-waisted jacket became a fashion of the time and was foisted off on generations of Etonians and all the schools that emulated the top alma mater.

Other examples are little less ridiculous. It is proudly declared (though sometimes disputed) that the Etonian black was the result of the boys going into mourning for George III. At least no one need wear it to-day once he tops the five-feet-two mark. Until the 'thirties the Bluecoat boys of Christ's Hospital wore a peculiar headgear that was a hangover from a brilliant piece of legislation by Elizabeth I. She insisted that all over the age of six years and in receipt of less than twenty pounds p.a. should be branded with a small flat hat. Tucked away in a labyrinth of reaction as the legislation disappeared, the Bluecoats woke up one morning to find



"Your half-hour is up, Mr. Bryson."

they had acquired a proud tradition—and who would dare to interfere with a proud tradition? Nobody dared, for years.

The boy's school uniform to-day may be slightly more functional—but only because we are nearer to one of the changes. Note that the striped blazer of the early twentieth century and the lounge suit (with the fatuous concession of short trousers) are already freezing into immobility. Give us another hundred years and a siren-suited adult community will still be packing sonny off to school like a little man in a grey flannel suit.

The designers are not entirely to blame. Like a mink-coated wife, children are too often used as the success symbol of their industrious father, who dresses them with conspicuous lavishness and a psychology which in earlier centuries would have urged him to advertise his wealth by clothing himself in garments which rendered menial tasks an impossibility. The poor little rich boy is soon disciplined into the sorry realization that only the son of the destitute can afford to pass his time happily in a green jersey, a fourpenny-all-off haircut and those indestructible boots with metal things to wind the laces round.

While girls' clothes give more freedom than boys' (another paradox) they are even more hideous. Consider, for example, the shapeless gym slip with the low, loose sash; the thick stockings; the hat like an inverted pot; the elasticized knickers which swapped for a swim-suit leave a tell-tale red ring round the thigh. Little wonder British women have acquired abroad a reputation for nothing more than a good complexion.

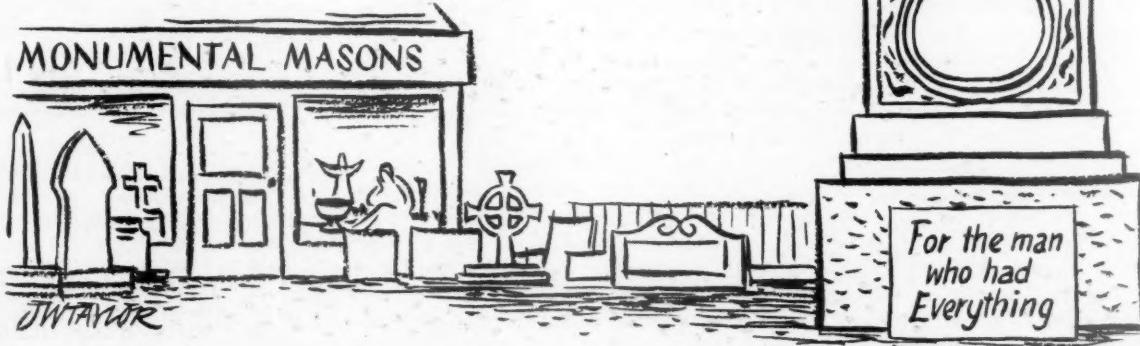
The real answer to the problem is to approach children's clothes from an

entirely different angle. The show-off principles of conspicuous lavishness and fashion are based entirely on sex and it must be realized that until they arrive at puberty children are technically neuter. They are, therefore, personally unaffected by the influences that decide the clothes of their parents. They are oblivious of the need to attract one another because the physical urge to do so has not yet arrived: even during biology lectures boys seldom make passes at girls who share classes.

So the current trends whereby adult clothes trek implacably towards more and more uniformity while children's clothes are left to reflect the more foolish facets of earlier traditions should be roughly inverted. If adults *must* go to the past for their children's fashions, they should consider that it is not petrified, but offers greater expression of individuality; children should be wrapped up in some simple, inexpensive, untearable over-all garment that neither hampers their physical development nor distracts them from approaching the sartorial responsibilities of puberty with a mind unblemished by the nonsensical experience of school uniform.

Indeed, we should regard the switch to adult clothes, and all their exciting experiences of taste and fashion, as a privilege not to be enjoyed before a certain amount of maturity has been proved. Perhaps "baby clothes" could be discarded only after a successful assault on the Eleven Plus.

Once the child enters his teens, of course, the problem inverts itself—for the whole attitude then becomes based on a sudden discovery of sex and an inability to do much about it. A boy who wishes to attract a girl soon learns that one way is to dress well—but





"Oh, it must have changed hands."

hitherto no one has attempted to teach him how and he has had no inclination to find out for himself. Thus he must experiment, and he must experiment, what is more, on a tight budget. He would like a tie of each colour—but this being economically impossible he crams all the colours into one tie. Only when he has become economically independent of parents and reached a stage where girls are no longer a novelty can he settle down to considering his clothes in a proper perspective.

We might accelerate his reaching this maturity by considering his clothes in a proper perspective ourselves. Were parents to assist teenagers during the flamboyant age through which all have to pass, the disease would be the more rapidly purged and reasonable styles the sooner appreciated.

But instead of being encouraged to wear the right things, teenagers are too often only discouraged from wearing the

wrong things. Clumsy exaggerated attempts at following fashion are immediately repressed as signs of a latent Teddy Boy, and the surly fight for self-expression drags through the whole of the pimplies period.

And probably due to his underpayment, or to the airy attitude of the academic to worldly things, the authority with which a youngster has most contact—the school-teacher—is well placed among the dullest dressed people in the world. So the boy gladly adopts sartorial symbols which readily proclaim his opposition to the traditional enemy.

Lectures in clothes and taste, as part of the normal teenage curriculum, are the answer. Travelling lecturers might well show an improvement in a couple of generations—in teachers too if they could be persuaded to sit in. But certainly the knowledge of how to dress himself properly for specific occasions is

more likely to be of value to a lad in later life than the knowledge that the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are resolutely democratic. Girls, too, might be instructed in the sensible use of cosmetics and personal presentation, for it is only by our example that we can improve them. Otherwise, bereft of understanding authority, the teenager will turn for example to "Pop" rather than to Father and find excuse for sartorial vulgarity in self-identification. For the sixteen-year-old in rock 'n' roll jeans is only a slightly older equivalent of his kid brother in a Lone Ranger set.

Other contributors to this series will be:

The Rev. SIMON PHIPPS
R. G. G. PRICE
PAUL REILLY
C. H. ROLPH
ALAN ROSS
SIR JOHN WOLFENDEN

Up the American Alley

By E. S. TURNER

IT turns out that Lord Rank is only one of several *entrepreneurs* who hope to import the American bowling craze to Britain.

Armed with the facts, we can face the future without fear. Already the United States Embassy has very civilly issued a press communiqué outlining the social revolution effected by the bowling centre in America. Which prompts the thought: When a pioneer recently opened an English fish-supper shop in New York, did the British Embassy in Washington issue a press hand-out describing the part played by fish and chips in the British way of life? One doubts it.

The post-war annals of bowling, which for so long had been associated with ungracious living, are positively stuffed with social significance. It is now a story of million-dollar establishments with up to sixty micro-levelled and acoustically muted bowling lanes, all with Automatic Pinspotters, Underlane Ball Return, Radaray Foul Detectors, Pindicators, and Free Clinics (for correcting bowling errors); the whole flanked with barbecue patios, cocktail lounges, swim pools, beauty parlours, floor shows and fountains.

It is also the story of "Iron Man" Andy Varipapa, Connie Schwoegler, Buddy Bomar, Buzz Fazio, Fuzzy Shimada, Sylvia Wene and other ten-pin titans and Sallies of the alleys, for whose names one scans in vain the American Embassy's hand-out.

This summary refers to factors—economic, cultural and mechanical—behind the present boom, but fails to mention what may be the most significant aspect of all: that the bowling craze is a Revolt against Youth. For generations the game was tyrannized by pin boys—that is, the boys who used to set up the pins after they had been knocked down. They were apt to be surly, off-hand and tip-hungry. They were also apt to make sarcastic remarks about the technique of bowlers, especially women bowlers. Or, if they made no comment, they chewed in derisory fashion. Obviously the game could never prosper until this tiresome human element was extruded; and it may well

be that golf will double in popularity when mechanized caddies are perfected.

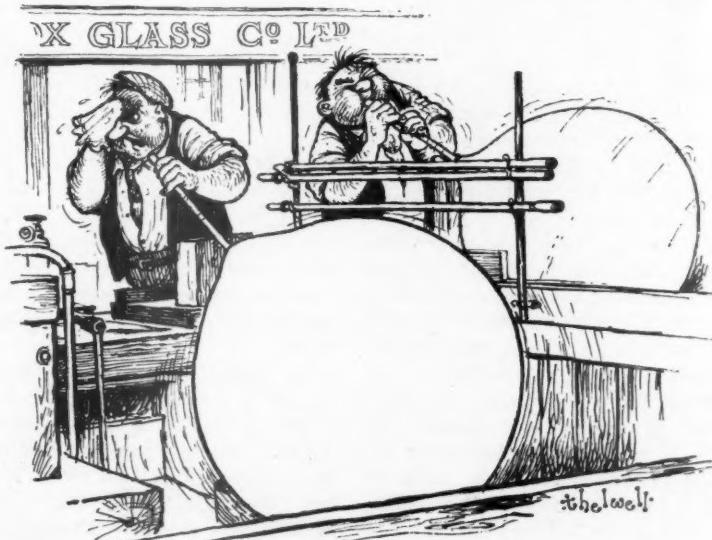
No one expects a bowler to set up the pins himself, any more than one expects a skier to trudge uphill. The problem, therefore, was one for the engineers. In 1937 a firm which had distinguished itself by making a pretzel-bending machine ("the machine they said couldn't be made") took over a rudimentary device created by gifted amateurs with the aid of lamp shades and flower pots. Getting the bugs out of this contraption was not easy, but by 1953 a perfected automatic pinspotter was in mass production.

Now, as soon as a player has bowled his ball, a respectful machine lifts such pins as have not been felled, sweeps away the casualties, restores the untouched pins to their spots and returns the ball. When all the pins have been scattered it deposits a new set. A problem for the designers was the rule which said that pins laterally displaced but not capsized must be restored to the same spot from which they had been dislodged; but men who could bend pretzels were not to be thwarted by difficulties like this. Many other embellishments were added. The Pindicator, for instance, displays on a lighted panel, for those unwilling to believe

their eyes, the number of pins remaining upright and their relative positions. A further refinement hardly envisaged in 1937 is the televised nursery, as installed at Skokie, Illinois. When Mom has bowled she sits down before a television set operating on a closed circuit. The camera methodically sweeps all corners of the nearby playroom, enabling her to see whether Junior is having his arm twisted.

The pin boy is now on his way to limbo with the link boy and the climbing boy. One does not wish to push the thing too far, but obviously the moral is: If you cannot discipline youth, replace it with robots. It may be that the pin boys had much to put up with, for a code of bowling etiquette significantly advises "Don't double-ball the pin boys." A number of compulsorily retired pin-boys have now joined junior bowling leagues.

There is a theory that bowling only began to boom when it won Mom's approval. While watching bowlers on television (9000 viewing hours in 1957, total now uncountable) she observed that the new-style centres were patronized by shaved and tie-wearing males and by women differing from herself only in that they wore snazzy "action skirts" and bowling shoes. Clearly, she



"A curse on these wretched bubble cars!"



decided, this once-squalid sport could be a family affair. In no time the pastime was transmuted and, indeed, transfigured by "the onset of togetherness." A further attraction was that, here and there, bowling centres were rewarding skilled players with free scholarships for their children and holiday trips to the Virgin Islands.

If additional encouragement were needed it was to be found in the physical and therapeutic advantages of bowling—"there's hardly a muscle in the body that isn't brought into play." Dr. Herman Bundesen, president of the Chicago Board of Health, has been quoted as saying: "The bending and rhythmic muscular movements of the bowler literally massage the intestinal walls and may be a factor in stimulating intestinal action." That "may be" is a bit cautious, but doctors always were. Other health experts have claimed that

bowling corrects forward bulge in men and rearward bulge in women.

Inevitably, there were psychiatrists to point out that the appeal of bowling is in satisfying a man's urge to knock things down. For once the psychiatrists may be right. Only recently was it discovered that labourers are kinder to their wives when they are engaged on demolition work. In the bowling alley a man may get a sore thumb (through not having the ball properly fitted by a reputable dealer) but at least he will lose his sore head.

It appears that bowling has done much to soothe the nerves of New York's mid-town workers. Instead of sullenly jostling home on racketty subways they stay in town for an hour or two of bowling, and the "pinched harried looks vanish." Perhaps this is the answer to London's rush-hour problem?

One does not want to harp on omissions, but the American Embassy handout neglects to mention the age-old affinity between beer and bowling. This cannot be because of any superior attitude towards beer. We all know by now that Beer Belongs. Those who report the annual championships of the American Bowling Congress are apt to make remarks like "The list of top teams reads as usual like a roll of breweries," but this sort of thing must not be interpreted as a sneer. Brewers have done as much to boost big league bowling as Mom has done to boost family bowling. Sometimes a heat-treating company or a mutual benefits association will finish high up in the list but it is the men who wear the brewers' silks who carry off the big prizes. If brewers do not treat their stars well, other brewers will soon bid for them. One year the Budweiser team rolled up at the Will Rogers Memorial Coliseum at Fort Worth in a \$250,000 bus, with its own bathroom, shower, galley, bunks and private apartment for one of the firm's executives. Those championships, by the way, may last for ten weeks. If the fans wanted to be awkward they could spin out the annual event for more than a year.

The American Bowling Congress employs its own historiographers, who can have had few setbacks to record in recent years, unless one counts the action of President Eisenhower in removing his predecessor's bowling alley from the White House.

In Britain, too many of us are still at the stage of shoving halfpennies or, in holiday mood, of shying at coconuts or, in really abandoned moments, trying to Tip the Lady Out of Bed. Almost certainly the brewers will have to introduce us to the game on commercial television; it will make a change from watching people trying to bounce balls from one drum to another and thence into a tambourine.

At least we have the advantage that bowling does not have to live down a wicked past, for we got all that out of our system in Henry VIII's time. Nor do we need to work up from sawdust to deep pile, from T-shirts to dinner jackets. If we start in lounge suits Lord Rank will probably be well enough pleased. But we do suffer at the moment from the lack of a Will Rogers Memorial Coliseum for our national fiestas.

Meanwhile, Mr. Macmillan might

care to consider whether a bowling alley should be incorporated in the new Number Ten (the estimates are surely high enough to cover a fully mechanized one). Also the directors of Guinness may wish to set aside £100,000 or so to buy a decent bus, with or without a private compartment for Lord Iveagh. Bowling shirt factories, one hopes, will soon be springing up, perhaps in distressed Lancashire. And silversmiths will turn their genius to designing suitable trophies; as, for example, fluted pillars surmounted by globes surmounted by ladies in action skirts with their thumbs in bowling balls.

Lastly, sport writers would do well to familiarize themselves with the jargon of the sport, which goes like this: "The 30-year-old embalmer tossed eleven straight strikes in the finale, only to come in high on the last ball and leave the 4 and 7 pins unscathed." The Carduses of bowling will be able to do much better than that.

Reverie in a Half-Empty Cinema

A TROPICAL moon burns on the glistening water;
Palms sweep down from the shadowed hills above;
Out on the beach, in Technicolor close-up,
A boy and a girl make love.

While the echoing auditorium resounds
With murmurings from the long Pacific rollers;
And here in the Circle I sit and contemplate
The coming of the bowlers.

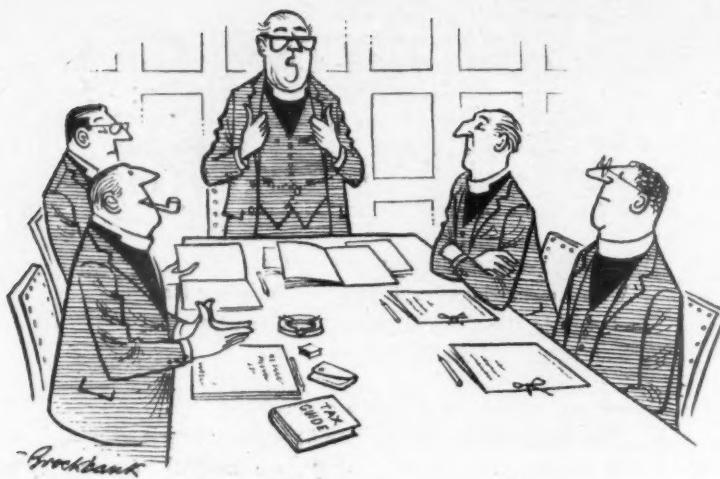
Soon they will be part of one's experience,
Normal, accepted. But something within me grieves
That this one-and-ninepenny shrine of the last Romantics
Should be filled with white shirt-sleeves,

With a blaze of light where once there was scented darkness,
And where there was music, hoarse contestants calling;
And faint in the distance, like a funeral drum,
The sound of skittles falling.

— KEITH STYLES



"For heaven's sake, you said 'Don't let's order more than we need.'"



"We are gathered here to analyse our recent consumer motivation research on pre-April-5th marriages."

Life at Porridge's

Welcome, Stranger

By MARJORIE RIDDELL

I AM the Press Relations Officer at Porridge's, that small but exclusive store in Mayfair, just off Piccadilly. I have worked there for several months, but I still remember my first day quite clearly.

Sometimes I think Porridge's remembers it too.

I was received and welcomed by the Assistant Director of Advertising, from whom, almost immediately, I learned a new word. Un-Porridgean.

"Here is a copy of our Directive for New Personnel, Miss Turner," Carper said. "Read it carefully. Familiarize yourself with our rules. And remember the most important rule of all: to break a rule is Un-Porridgean."

He went off to a meeting and I began to read the Directive.

It was pretty grim. I would never have dreamed so many things could be un-Porridgean. Whistling in the sales departments, for instance. Saying "Okey-doke, dear" instead of "Yes, madam." And getting hiccups while serving a customer.

"If attacked by hiccups while serving a customer," the Directive said, "a sales assistant will say 'I beg your pardon, sir

or madam as the case may be, but I regret I am indisposed and must request you to permit me to obtain for you the services of another assistant.' The assistant will then request permission from her Buyer to leave the department and obtain a glass of water, after which she will return to her post as soon as possible. In no circumstances will a sales assistant continue to serve her customer with hiccups."

I decided to have a cigarette.

Then one of the copywriters came in and introduced himself as Percy Crane. And I discovered another un-Porridgean practice. "Didn't they tell you?" Percy said. "We are not allowed to smoke."

And so, of course, my smoking has doubled since I came to Porridge's. (Why, I wonder, is it not noticed and remarked upon that most people in the Advertising Department visit the washroom at least twice in every hour?)

Percy went on: "Would you like to come in with the rest of us in buying *The Advertising News* every week? The Department copy doesn't reach us until after the Advertising Director and Carper have read it. And by then it's too late."

"Too late?"

"Too late to answer advertisements for other jobs."

"All of you?" I asked, after a moment.

"That's right. I thought you might be interested."

"But I've only been here half an hour."

"Yes," he said. "I know."

After he'd gone I sat quietly for a few moments looking out of the window. Then I went off to the washroom.

It was later in the morning that I had my first brush with Authority. One of the weekly magazines rang me and said someone from their features department had visited the store last week and chosen, among other articles to be photographed for a gift feature, a small rubber giraffe. Everything had arrived at the studio but the giraffe.

I apologized and said I would have it sent to-day.

The Toy Department had no idea why the giraffe had not been sent, they didn't apologize, and I could have it now. (The form is for the Departments to send their stuff up to me, and I have it sent on to the press.) However, there was no one free to bring it up, so I would have to collect it myself.

I was on my way back to Advertising when at the top of one of the escalators I was tapped on the shoulder by a tall, imposing-looking man and beckoned to one side.

"I think you must be new here," he said. "Perhaps you have not yet read our Directive for New Personnel?"

"Oh, but I have."

He looked at me thoughtfully. And then said "But you are carrying a giraffe."

We stared at each other for a moment. "Well, yes," I said. "But only in a manner of speaking. I mean, this one is only about six inches long and—"

"Its size," he cut in, "is immaterial."

There was another short silence. Then he continued "Can you explain what you are doing with it?"

I explained.

"That is not the point," he said, when I'd finished. "Why are you carrying a giraffe?"

When I didn't answer, he went on, "You are carrying a giraffe on an escalator. Merchandise will NOT be carried on the escalators. A giraffe is merchandise."

I had broken a rule!

"I'm so sorry—"

"Rules," he said, "are made to be kept. That is why they are made. That is their purpose. They are not made to be broken. That would be illogical. Porridge's was founded in 1809 by our founder. He was a very great man, later the first Lord Porridge, and his sternest rule regarding rules was that rules are not made to be broken. And that rule still holds good to-day. The years since 1809 have seen many changes in the outside world, but not, I assure you, at Porridge's. Governments have fallen, anarchists have risen, the Empire has disintegrated. But not at Porridge's. Porridge's stands firm on the rock of precedent and law and order. One *knows* what will happen at Porridge's because nothing can happen that has not happened before—provided, and I repeat *provided*—the rules are obeyed. *And obeyed they are!*"

"It's only a small rubber giraffe," I said.

"A small rubber giraffe," he said, "no doubt harmless in the right place, at the right time, becomes an entirely different proposition on an escalator."

I went to the washroom.

When I got back to my office there was a note from Carper on my desk. It read: "Please see me my office to-morrow 9 a.m. re Vice-President and giraffe on escalator."

The rest of the day was busy, but unremarkable, until just before five.

I was on the ground floor coming back from Handbags when I stopped to look at the handkerchiefs. Presently a customer standing next to me, obviously mistaking me for another customer, said, "Aren't the lace handkerchiefs beautiful?"

I agreed with her. "Expensive, though. And the plain ones, too. Look at these, two shillings each! Woolworth's have exactly the same kind for sixpence."

It was the shock of seeing that two-shilling ticket, of course; but I realized instantly the enormity of what I'd said. I'd made what was probably the most un-Porridgean remark since the first Porridge sold his first candle-snuffer.

So when I turned abruptly from the counter and bumped into Percy Crane I was glad he wasn't the Vice-President.

On our way back to Advertising, Percy said "I couldn't help over-

hearing what you were saying just now. Didn't you get a pep-talk on Porridgean behaviour from the Store Controller before you started here?"

"No. She was away."

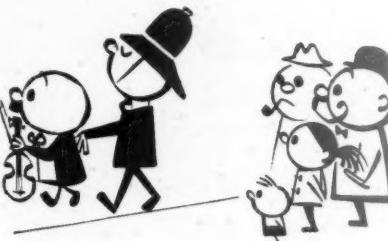
"Ah," he said. "Then that explains it. I wondered, when you were talking to her about the handkerchiefs, if you'd met her before."

One of the most interesting things about that first day at Porridge's is that its promise has been amply fulfilled.

(*to be continued*)

"One of the passengers on the train said to me: 'None of the people who refused to get out said a word. They just sat reading their papers or talking.'"
Daily Telegraph

Or hissing through closed lips.



Pillory

A. P. H. asked for "reasonable" grievances. Further contributions by readers appear below.

Once upon a time it was my grocer and the coal merchant, now it is my lawyer and the gods of local government who address me as The Reverend Hadden. Even some of my fellow clergy (oh, blackest of treachery!) have sunk as low. I had thought of protesting to The Right Honourable Macmillan, but instead I make my protest through that lover of Good Words, Sir Herbert.

THE REV. G. P. HADDEN, HOVE

WITHOUT SUBSTANCE

Can't we find a better name for aspiring Cabinet Ministers than "Shadows"? When newspapers refer to Mr. B. as "Shadow Foreign Minister" I feel it invests him with an importance he has not got. "Would-be" is not quite derogatory enough. It seems to need some equivalent to the Indian baboo's "Failed B.A."

ROBERT TAYLOR, NORTHWOOD, MIDDX.

SPEED CHECK

We bemoan the frightening speeds of the modern car, but the real danger stems from the terrific acceleration and braking power which allow the inexpert to whip up to fifty or more on narrow busy thoroughfares between groups of traffic lights less than four hundred yards apart. Remedy? Lower the rate of acceleration. When the cry goes up for less speed the makers bleat that mechanical restriction would jeopardize our export trade. All right—let them fit a simple "governor" on the home market cars and make it compulsory by law.

B. S. WARE, PUTNEY, S.W.



ROY DAVIS



"Let's sit the next one out—I'm whacked!"

Garage Business

From Paris CARLTON LAKE discusses the perils of car ownership

ANYWHERE in Paris the garage business is a good one to be in. I used to leave my car in front of the house nights, but when the F.L.N. started knifing my tyres every few days I ran for cover. The garage monopoly in our quarter belonged to a man who'd done a mighty efficient job helping the Germans run the French railways during the Occupation. He was tall, paunchy, with a shiny domed cranium, square black moustache and eyes like a flounder's. I explained the problem. He was properly sympathetic. But what *had* happened wasn't a patch on what *might* happen, he warned. How about the man around the corner who'd had his convertible top shredded, or the poor bird from the American Embassy who'd had "U.S.—Go Home" painted the length of his? That dated back a few years to the Communists' heyday, he admitted, but who was to say it couldn't happen again?

I told him he was wasting his time. I'd seen the light. Could I come in? He sighed. "That's the rub. I'd like to help you out, but I have no space. We're adding on right now but it takes time." He reached for a roll of plans

and spread them across his desk. "This is how things will look when the job's done," he said, tapping the blueprint proudly: "A hundred and fifty more cars, washmobile, all chrome and glass." Then he looked at me sadly, like an enormous bald Saint Bernard dog. "These improvements are ruining me," he said. "They've eaten all my reserves. Some of my clients have loaned me money to go ahead—at a normal rate of interest—and as space has opened up I've made it available to others who asked to participate in our expansion. As I say, I have no room to-day, but to-morrow's another affair. Someone might move. Or die. Well . . ." He pushed his stomach away from the desk. "Keep in touch. It's a shame to be systematically vandalized."

I decided to play along. "If you *should* find space for another car," I asked, "how much of a loan would it take?"

"Let's put it this way," he said. "If someone offered to help me to the extent of, say, 350,000 francs at five per cent, why naturally, when space opened up, he'd be the one I'd logically think of. You understand?" I understood—

the better for knowing that mortgage money in France costs up to twelve per cent. When you can get any.

On Monday the *garagiste* 'phoned. A client who'd been talking of selling his car had finally sold it. Would I care to drop by in the morning? The next morning he welcomed me warmly and launched into an enthusiastic progress report on the upper storeys. As he started to unroll the blueprints again I reached into my wallet for the 350,000 francs. Before I finished counting them he had brought out a form that acknowledged receipt of the money, at five per cent, returnable on demand any time after one year. He added the date and his initials and we were in business. He counted the bills carefully and put them into the till. He handed me an official price-list.

"You see," he said, "the daily rate for a car like yours is 600 francs. On that basis a month would cost you 18,000. But now you're one of the family; you get the monthly rate—10,300—any month begun charged as a full month. At that rate, though, I lose money on a tank like yours. So, to make out, I must put you down for the maintenance service, also 10,300. We take care of your car automatically. You bring it in at night wet, dirty; you drive away, the next morning, *impeccable*.

"It's a gift," he said. "You order a wash job twice a week, say, at 700 francs. In a month that's 6,300. For 4,000 more you get everything—all kinds of extras. For instance, every time you have the air checked I could charge you thirty francs for the first tyre, twenty for each of the others. On maintenance it's all free."

A bargain, I agreed. "Good," he said, "sign here." I read the fine print. I was guaranteeing to buy from him all petrol, oil, tyres, tubes, slipcovers, radios, heaters, antifreeze, repairs to body and engine, grease jobs and oil changes every 1,500 kilometres; likewise, to sell my car or buy another only through him. I signed.

"That's 20,600," he said briskly. "You're in luck. To-day's the seventh. You lose practically nothing of the current month." I paid him. "Just a thought," he said. "My boys are all hard workers; honest, too. But give them a little something now and again. Makes a good feeling. They'll work better for you. You don't mind?" I

thanked him for his advice. We shook hands and I left.

For a week the car problem faded. The *gardien* didn't always wipe the *whole* car but he was pretty faithful about the windows. I could always tell: they were streaked from his dirty chamois. And a few grease spots usually transferred from his clothes to the upholstery. I called one juicy gob to the *garagiste's* attention. "You should buy slipcovers," he said. "I could get you something nice for about 40,000."

I explained I didn't like slipcovers. I told him I had a nice new set in the boot I'd be glad to let *him* have for about 10,000.

"Well," he said, "you're taking a chance but if that's the way you see it, better try this." He walked over to a cabinet and returned with a bottle of cleaning fluid. "Fine stuff," he said. "Comes equipped with a pad on top—very easy to use. Only 300 francs. Don't pay now. I'll put it on your bill."

A few days after that I picked up the car one morning and noticed that a wing I'd recently had repainted bore a fresh checkmark scratched into the paint. I showed it to the *garagiste*.

"Oh, well," he said, "after all you've been through what's a *bricole* like that? Don't give it a second thought." He waved at me smilingly and excused himself. A client upstairs in the *atelier*.

About a week later, when I went for the car, I noticed a second checkmark, just like the first and overlapping it. I found the *garagiste* standing in the

middle of the *atelier*, arms folded, surveying his domain. I told my story and we went downstairs. He studied the marks silently, then asked me into his office. He waved me to a chair, leaned back in his own and fixed me with one of his most mournful gazes.

"*Mon cher Monsieur*," he said, "I'm no *garagiste* in the ordinary sense. Think of me as a *moraliste*, a kind of La Fontaine, if you will. I bought this business in order to create my own little Swiss republic. I aim to be independent of the world. My employees are devoted to me. I try to keep them happy. I answer to no one. I accept whom I will as clients and keep them so long as it pleases me."

His eyes had narrowed to a point where he began to resemble a pre-war New England banker examining a loan application.

"Last week," he said, "I was obliged to expel a client who ordered a new car direct from the distributor. I disliked doing so, but our contract clearly specifies that all car purchases be made through me. His action was doubly unfortunate: I lost the five per cent commission I should have received, but his by-passing me did not save *him* five per cent. The distributor gained, of course, but I'm not in business to save money for distributors."

"Now, then—when you came I suggested you make an occasional present to my employees. May I, *sans indiscretion*, ask if you've seen fit to do so?"

I told him that so little time had elapsed—two weeks, perhaps—that I hadn't yet doled out any tips.

He looked hurt. "I'm sorry," he said. "I'd hoped to ease the friction that way. Mind you, I'm not saying I think any employee of mine *did* mark your car. It's just that sometimes those who have less resent those who have more, and at such times the man who has insulated himself against that unfortunate but very understandable human reaction suffers less than one who hasn't. That's clear, isn't it?" It was.

It's all right now. I've had the slipcovers replaced. I kick in to the wash-boy, the grease-monkey, the *gardiens* (night and day), regular as clockwork. And when minor inconveniences occur—running out of petrol a day or two after having the tank filled—I don't look too deep for causes. You don't have to be a petroleum engineer to realize petrol is pretty volatile stuff. I just call the garage and they send their war-surplus Jeep to bring me more at the customary time-spent-and-kilometres-travelled rate.

Clients come and clients go but no space remains vacant overnight. The work on the upper storeys rolls merrily along. The *garagiste* looks more like a mastiff every day. How I ever thought of him as a Saint Bernard I can't imagine.

Man in Apron

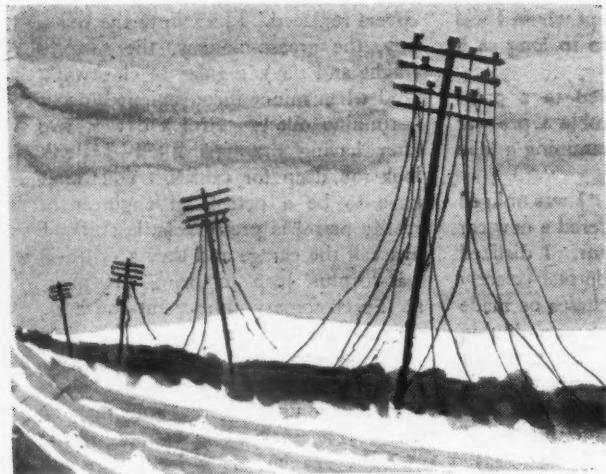
by Larry



Secrets of the Budget

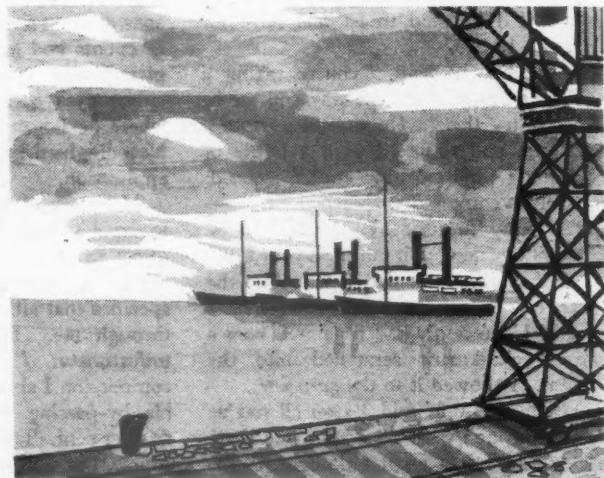
Every taxpayer knows that of our national revenue £718,210,000,000,000 has gone during the current financial year on Defence, Atoms, Health, Motorways, Disused Coalmines and TV Quiz Inquiries.

But what of the remaining £4,107,463,459—the little day-to-day expenditures that may not make big news but have kept the country going?



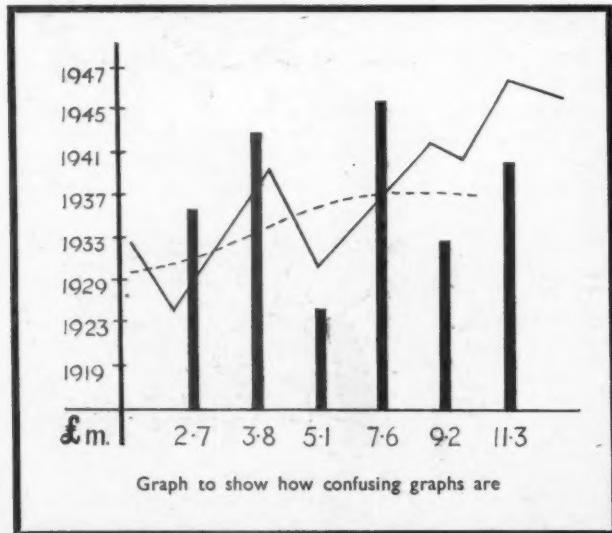
£23,700,000 on Communications

Insured against dog-bite and (since June) pursuit by runaway rotary scythes, the modern postman pedals out confidently. A grant-in-aid for the new front wheel fork stabilizer keeps his bike free of Parcel Wobble. Above: Telephone line brought down by snow.



£168,000,000 on Shipbuilding

Part of the colossal new fleet of Continental car ferries by which Britain hopes to recapture the money of holidaymaking Britons. Work is under way too on an Atlantic ship to meet the air challenge—a three-knot tub with an Occupational Therapy room where business men can do deals the leisurely way.



A Human Incident

Income-tax collectors are by no means the grisly extortioners we all believe them to be. A member of the London 19582734 Collection at Wapping Old Stairs tells this little story:

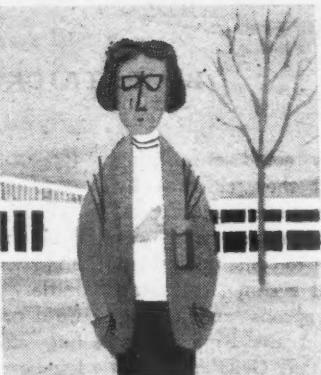
"Looking round the office for a suitable vase for primroses, we found a bundle of pound notes. No one knew where it came from, and to pay it in would have upset our books."

"We decided, therefore, either to send it to a Mr. H. T. Baffin as a rebate—his name having been chosen with a pin—or, in more serious vein, to put it in the Tea Fund."

"Common sense won the day, but the incident shows that we have warm hearts."

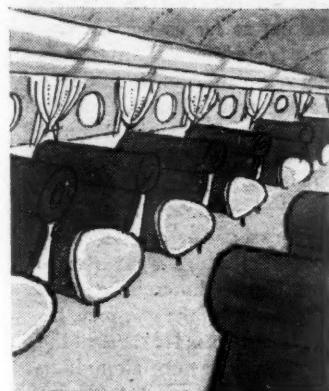
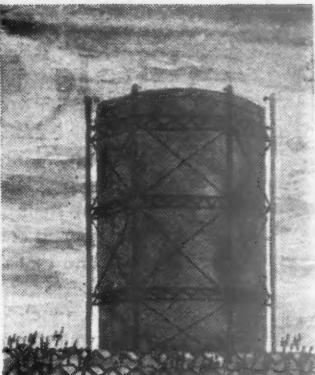
£889,000,000 on Teachers' Ex Gratia Payments

Our modern educational system calls not only for expensive functional schools but for expensive functional teachers capable of handling hot custard-jugs, teaching sex and taking senior forms round knackers' yards. Miss Heywood, shown on right, is not typical.



£853,000,000 on Public Utility Architecture

Typical of the unobtrusive excellence of our gas industry is this new gasholder, built without anyone noticing. Despite milder weather, gas customers made it a bumper year for Final Notices.



£499,800,000 on Civil Aircraft

Inside a giant airliner now under construction, with novel touches of discomfort which will enable the airline to charge lowest-ever tourist fares and get ordinary people flying.



£416,000,005 5s. on Other Items

Whether catering for Royal Garden Parties or showing people round the Mint, those who administer our national revenue are always tinged with humanity. Here a costly convict-chase is held up while ducks cross the road—the sort of thing that makes us all proud to be British taxpayers.

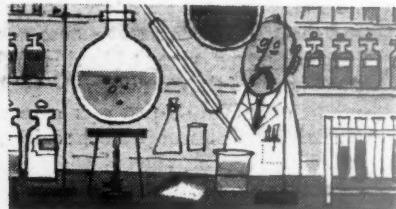
£110,500 on Science, Nature, Arts



£36 on Bird Rehabilitation—The Hampshire pilot scheme of educating country sparrows to stop them chucking thatch about has been undertaken by Miss Brigid Pottrell, who only costs the taxpayer bus fares. She reports no success so far.



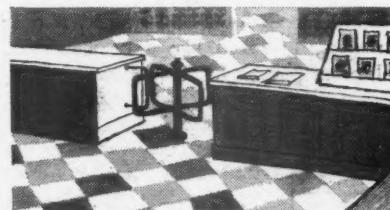
£1,000 on the Living Theatre—Theatres need Government help when they are like the Little Torridge Former Memorial Hall, where acting in Spanish and Gaelic simultaneously is seen while the audience keenly look forward to the drop-curtain with its interval ads.



£250 on Alcohol Research—In a secret Government laboratory Doc "Happy" Togg is seeking to refute irresponsible teetotal assertions that alcohol can cause double vision. His findings, if successful, will assure the alcohol revenue and more than justify his pay.



£984 on Permanent Exhibitions—The public dearly loves a permanent exhibition. This one, on Interior Wall Surfacing for Industry, is off Oxford Street and handy to sit down in while shopping.



£230 on Museum Turnstiles—Without turnstiles museum-goers would swarm in wielding umbrellas. In the last three months 20 turnstiles have been fitted with the new cogwheels angled to resist Anxiety Push caused by free admission.



£108,000,000 on Painting—This picture, possibly by a pupil of Ravioli, was bought for the nation from a Turin shoemaker who had it for a door in his hencoop. Experts think it is of someone defying someone, and will look better when cleaned.

Animals in My Life

By PATRICK RYAN

THOUGH mankind may have cause for complaint, I haven't given the animals much trouble in my life. Unless you count the rocket cat of Horsham and that affair with the giraffe.

I don't tangle much with animals because of the way they look at me. Put me in front of any beast of the field and it immediately looks deep down into my soul. Give over, its eyes say mockingly, drop that old veneer, buster, we've read your psychiatrist's reports, we can see right through to the punk inside.

Cats are the worst. I never stared back at a cat yet that didn't know all about my early, fumbling love-life, and sneered accordingly.

My daughter has a dachshund which eats only the thumbs of gloves and this literary white mouse. We have the largest collection of thumbless gloves in the world and you can tell any member of our family in winter by the bare frost-bitten digits on either hand.

Whenever I stray into his room the white mouse drops whatever he's doing and stares at me like a statue. I think he's making notes about me, using me as a character in some crazy mouse-novel he's batting out on my typewriter in the small hours of the morning.

The only animals that ever gave me unadulterated pleasure were the chickens of my maiden aunts, Clara and Emmeline. They were so fond of

animals that they could only bring themselves to kill their chickens by calling them after tyrants, murderers, and assorted villains of history. It was an enchanting sight to come upon them in the half-light of evening, scattering corn from their aprons and calling gently upon Jack the Ripper, Dr. Crippen, Adolf Hitler, Genghis Khan, and Pontius Pilate to come and get it.

The business of the rocket cat was all most unfortunate. I was in love with a young woman at Horsham at the time and she invited me to a week-end party at her home so that her parents might inspect me. Her mother, I gathered, lived only for cats.

I arrived half an hour before I was expected and a maid showed me into a sitting-room to await the young woman, who was dressing or something. It was all chintz and stockbroker Tudor and the only other occupant was a big ice-blue Persian cat which lay on the rug in front of the deep mediæval hearth. There was no fire in the grate.

The cat gave me the old feline depth analysis look and went back to brooding. Ten minutes later a boy of five came in. He was carrying a Redskin's head-dress, a Guy Fawkes mask, and a football-fan's rattle.

"Hello," he said. "Would you like to play with me?"

I guessed correctly that he was little Ingram, a brother of my love, and calculated that kindness to him would be a certain route to his mother's heart. He wanted someone to be his horsey-horsey and to this I agreed. He took me out into the hall and showed me a large, black, hairy rug. I don't know what animal it came from but when I got down on all-fours and draped it over myself, I looked like a headless yak. Ingram put on his Guy Fawkes mask,

topped it with the Redskin's feathers and climbed on my back.

Roaring like a walrus I lumbered back into the sitting-room, while the child whooped and swung his football rattle. Four miles any side of Lhasa we'd probably have passed unnoticed, but stalking across that Horsham lounge we went over big with the ice-blue Persian.

Never in his life had he seen an animal like us; as far as he was concerned we were a monster from some cat-hell, the yak-man from Outer Space, the roaring bat-eyed Thing his mother had scared him to sleep with. He took one look as we came at him, let out a shriek of terror and shot like a rocket straight up the chimney. Soot came down in gallons but the cat stayed up there and Ingram and I went over to look for him. I saw him crouched on a ledge about six feet up the chimney, his eyes shining like jewels. He thought the yak-man was coming up after him, screamed blue murder and tossed soot down in my face.

Ingram burst into tears and ran out of one door as his mother and fourteen other people came in the other.

God knows I tried to explain but, with my face blacked up like a coon, that yak-skin swinging from my shoulders, and mother going on like Lady Bracknell, I just couldn't do my case justice.

I gathered that that cat went up the chimney as Ursula Snow-White Pearl of Ispahan. What it came down as I never heard but they had to get the fire brigade to do it. While they were all yelling and scrabbling about in the soot I dropped the rug and went out into the hall. I picked up my bag and let myself out. I never saw the girl.

The do with the giraffe was quieter and more surrealistic altogether. I was



in Uganda at the time and they told me that if ever I met a wild animal in my road while motoring I was to stop, hoot and wait for it to go away. I was driving a very small 1938 saloon from Arco to Ndoola when I came upon this giraffe. It was the biggest one I ever saw, tall as a young television mast and lanky with it. It stood plumb in the middle of the road, legs straddled, head bent to the ground, either eating tarmac or looking for something it had dropped.

I stopped and blew my hooter. The animal took no notice but went on swinging its head back and forth like a giant mine-detector. I waited and hooted for five minutes and then, patience exhausted, drove slowly forward, hoping to herd the beast out of the way. It raised its head on high at my approach, scuttled to the far side of the road and left me just enough space to get through. I revved up smartly and made for the gap . . . the giraffe took fright, reared up like a shying horse and came skipping back across the road . . . I braked hard, swung the wheel over to the left . . . skidded sideways . . . the car collided with a tree-stump and stopped . . . the giraffe lost its balance, its legs came swooping down, crashing on the roof of the car . . . the left hoof hit metal and slithered off to the road . . . the right hoof landed square on the canvas of the sunshine roof and tore straight through into the car.

I ducked to one side and the spotted leg came down past my shoulder like a rubber stamp, the plate of the hoof landing centrally between the two front seats and jamming itself between the metal rims at the bottom. The giraffe strained about a bit but the hoof was caught solid and he couldn't move it. After a minute or two of twisting and clattering, he finally gave up the struggle and stood quietly where he was, facing the car, one leg inside, one outside.

I tried to get out but the impact had shaken things up a bit and all the doors



"Mrs. Hinkley!"

and windows were jammed. I panicked, whoo-hooed and squirmed around for a while, knocking my face once or twice on that tawny, placid leg. Then I caught some of the giraffe's philosophy, relaxed in my seat and meditated.

The white ribbon of the road stretched clear and empty as far as the eye could see. The brown and yellow plain rolled away on both sides, dotted with scrub and thorn, the heat rising in quick wrinkles from the pale grass. I was the last man in the world, in the middle of nothing, on a Wednesday afternoon in Uganda, sealed up in a 1938 saloon, suspended in timeless time, alone with a giraffe's leg six inches from my left ear. I felt like a figment from Ionesco's imagination; given a couple of chairs and an Old Woman he'd have had a three-act play out of me and that giraffe's leg.

It was a situation dream-like and improbable and very, very peaceful. I was supposed to be playing tennis in Ndoola with my wife and a colonial service couple. My shorts had become uncomfortably tight for me of late and I was much happier where I was. Assured of a regular supply of tinned food and canned beer I could have lived out my life in that 1938 ivory tower. Once or twice, the giraffe bent his head and looked in at me and his leg, but he never said anything, either in recrimination or sympathy.

We sat there, a picture by Dali, for almost an hour before a convoy of agricultural officers came along. They were practical and hearty and saw the situation only as one of ridicule and mechanics. The timeless magic vanished, and when they saw it was me inside they sent to Ndoola for my wife. They always do that. Whenever I am in difficulties like that, just when the point of maximum indignity is at hand, somebody always sends for my wife. Not that she can ever do anything except ask irrational questions. It is probably all part of a national plot to keep her eternally one up.

"What on earth do you think you're doing in there?" she asked.





It was obvious that I was sitting next to a giraffe's leg in a small 1938 saloon car. Nobody in such circumstance could possibly *think* they were doing anything else.

"I'm riding on top of a No. 24 bus down the Tottenham Court bloody Road," I said. "It's raining hard and we're just passing the Dominion . . ."

Which, of course, helped a lot.

"You look a fool," she said, "sitting there like that."

Sitting where I was, Einstein would have looked a fool. I went into trance at that and clammed up completely. A mechanic cut right round the sunshine roof with a hacksaw and worked the animal's foot forward till the hoof slipped free. The giraffe reared suddenly up and away, taking the canvas roof with him as a fringe about his leg. I stood up and watched through the hole in the roof as he lolloped gracefully across the plain looking as if one leg was a flapping, upturned umbrella. He was going well through a belt of scrub when they all came around me in a great practical questioning horde and I lost sight of him. If ever you're in Uganda and you meet a giraffe with a sunshine roof around his leg, please wish him Happy Easter from me.

★

"Who will be America's next President?"
Daily Express
Mr. Mikoyan?

Codicil Two

WHEN I am dead, I hope that friends of mine Will go to some good restaurant and dine, And then, while wine and laughter light the town, Walk to the Treasury and burn it down. Nay, it were better done at half past three When they have finished lunch, and started tea, When they are there, the horrid brainy men Who plot unkindness in that robbers' den. Go, dear executors. Take them unaware, And scourge them, screaming, down the stately stair. Yell in the name of Haddock "You're the brutes Who put a tax on violins and flutes."

"That," you will add, "is not your only vice. Your minds are maggots and your hearts are mice That gnaw and nibble at the smallest cheese And fight malignantly for crumbs like these. Who, for example, can applaud the State That pilfers tribute from the parson's plate? But let us centre on a single sin: You put a tax on flute and violin."

"There is no tax on the electric drill, Or helicopters at the window-sill, On tractors roaring all the afternoon, Or that cracked bell that wakes me up too soon. There is no tax on any sort of noise Except the purest of the people's joys. You are the kind a Latin country shoots: You put a tax on violins and flutes."

"You do not tax the hammer or the spade: You do not tax the tools of any trade. There is no tax on paper, paint, or pen, Or the machines of literary men. Typewriters? Dictaphones? Oh, no: and yet You tax the oboe and the clarinet."

"You do not tax the fellow in the stalls At Covent Garden or the concert halls: But all the players in the band must pay (Except the pianist) on what they play (And there's a point we might one day discuss— Why the piano is excepted thus). You are a lot of featherheaded coots: Why put a tax on violins and flutes?"

"This was a tax designed in days of strife That we might shun the luxuries of life. Is music 'luxury'? and don't you know The war was finished fourteen years ago? You think a symphony is like cheroots: You keep a tax on violins and flutes."

This having said—and say it with a smile— Pray take some torches and ignite the pile.

My love to you.
Here endeth Codicil Two.

— A. P. II.

Forty Years On

By SIMON RAVEN

WHEN Otto Whitamore received an invitation to tea from the headmaster of his old school he was quite pleased to accept. Presumably, thought Otto, this was a get-together for old boys of his own standing. It would be interesting to see which of them had survived after all this time and whether any of them had a car as big as he had. But then again the date for which he was bidden, September 20, must be very near the beginning of the Michaelmas Term. A curious time for a busy headmaster to receive a lot of ageing ex-alumni. Perhaps, thought Otto, he wants to persuade me to give some lectures or even found a scholarship: for Otto, sixty years old and well-known as a novelist and superior worldling, was by now resigned to such requests. But if, said Otto to himself, he wants to discuss money or lectures, why didn't he say so? Perhaps he was afraid I should think up excuses in advance. And so, to be on the safe side, I shall. After which he climbed into his car and ignored the Surrey landscape for the entire twenty-mile journey, the better to devise excuses for not giving money to his old school.

* * * * *

At first Otto was surprised to see how young the Headmaster, who must have been nearly eighty, was still looking; but he immediately went on to consider something far more extraordinary—the presence of quantities of women and small boys. Quite clearly this must be the first day of term and the Headmaster was entertaining, as had always been the custom, the new boys and their mothers to tea.

"Whitamore," said the Headmaster, shaking hands, "I'm glad you arrived safely."

"Nice to see you again, Headmaster," said Otto with condescension.

"Call me 'sir,'" said the Headmaster with a vague wave of the hand, "and come and meet some of the boys."

Rather taken aback, Otto was led round and presented to about ten small

boys, all of whom, the Headmaster said, were in the School House like Otto. The School House, of which the Headmaster was *ex officio* housemaster, adjoined the Headmaster's lodge; and it was certainly true that Otto, in his day, had been a member of it. Still, it seemed rather odd that anyone should assume he would be much interested, on that account, in meeting quite so many urchins. Otto, however, being nothing if not polite, shook hands patiently. Presumably, he thought, I shan't be able to hear whatever the Headmaster wants to tell me until all these damned women and their brats have gone, so he helped himself to a stale green cake and settled down to wait.

But soon the mothers left, with long backward looks, and then senior boys appeared from the outhouses to take charge of the new boys variously assigned to them. Finally, only the ten boys who had been introduced to Otto as being of the Headmaster's own house remained. Ah, thought Otto, he'll soon have to come to the point now.

"Well, you chaps," said the Headmaster, "time to be off." And then to Otto: "You know the way, Whitamore. Take them all through to Matron's room to start unpacking."

"Don't you want to talk to me?" asked Otto.

"Later on, perhaps," said the Headmaster. "Take the rest along to Matron now, there's a good chap."

Matron was not the one he remembered, but she seemed to know all about Otto. Telling him to wait, she led the others away.

"Now, Whitamore," she said when she returned. "I've got your school clothes ready for you and I'll show you your cubicle when we've tried them on."

"But I'm not spending the night," said Otto stupidly.

Matron made a clucking noise and told Otto to strip, as she wanted to try on his school trousers.

At last, when Otto had adjusted his house tie to her satisfaction, she picked

up the rest of his kit and led him off to a cubicle in a long row of other cubicles.

"Now put everything away neatly," said matron, "and then wait till I send someone to take you into Prayers."

* * * * *

As the term went on Otto began to enjoy himself. Since all his letters to London were unanswered and his early attempts to find the car and escape were calmly thwarted by the prefects ("Rotten little new bug, trying to run away"), he judged it good policy to make the best of things. Of course P.T. and Corps parades were very disagreeable; and then again, although Otto had been a good cricketer and had narrowly missed his colours some forty years before, he had always hated football. It was very much the football season now ("Rotten little new bug, take off all those sweaters"). But for all these trials the plain food and the unaccustomed exercise did him good. Most of the boys were kind and pretended not to notice that he was well past the usual leaving age. All in all, matters might have been worse; and Otto was grateful for the opportunity of rubbing up on things like the *Aeneid* and the dates of English kings, about which he had been rather vague for some years now. Secretly, he was hoping to win the form prize and get promoted to the Under Fifth.

But even so, this could not go on for ever. His valet, he thought, not to mention his wife, must be very surprised at his absence. And then he was



"No, no, the milk comes out here."



under contract to finish a book by April, but the MS. had already been confiscated twice ("Writing again, *unhealthy* little new bug"). Thinking it over, and rejecting the unseemly idea of making trouble with the local police, Otto decided that the best thing to do was just to wait till the end of the term and then go home for the Christmas holidays like all the other boys. Once home, he would take good care not to be caught like this again—he would even avoid his old college. But meanwhile, whatever else might be said, being at school was certainly a very economical way of spending three months. So Otto settled down peacefully to wait for Christmas: he played Fives for his House Third Pair, arranged for a credit account at the tuck shop, and was soundly beaten for making up an over-educated limerick about Matron.

* * * * *
Five days before the end of the term Otto was sent for by the Headmaster.

"Whitamore . . . I've been very

worried," the Headmaster said, "about your Christmas holidays. You're an orphan, I know, and you don't seem to have any guardians."

"No, sir," said Otto, "but really . . ."

The Headmaster waved him silent.

"I was thinking," he said, "that it might be best for you to stay here with my wife and myself. Some three or four boys—parents abroad and so on—always have to do that, and we'd be glad to have you. In fact it is our Christian duty to have you. There is simply no one else responsible."

"But, sir . . ." began Otto desperately.

The Headmaster waved at him again.

"No one else responsible. So I shall give Matron instructions to send your belongings through to the Lodge on the last morning of term. You needn't worry. We don't stand on ceremony during the holidays, and my wife —"

"Now look here, Headmaster," said Otto, for panic made him stern despite himself, "I've had enough. I am a middle-aged man with modest literary

distinction and many other responsibilities. I won't say I haven't enjoyed myself here or that it hasn't done me a lot of good. But it is high time I went. And so, like everybody else, I shall leave on Tuesday morning. I must also give you official notice that I shall not come back next term."

The Headmaster looked almost pitying.

"You'd have got your promotion to the Under Fifth, you know."

"So I should hope," said Otto.

"And there's a good chance later on of a scholarship to King's or the House."

"Don't be ridiculous," screamed Otto, his manners finally forgotten.

"Whitamore," said the Headmaster gently, "when you were here—last time—you were unlucky to miss your cricket colours, I remember."

"Yes," said Otto trembling. "There was a lot of intrigue that year. I made forty-seven against Winchester; but the Captain of Cricket gave the last cap to Lord Camelot's son, Esmé, who asked him to stay at Camelot Chase for the holidays."

"I don't normally interfere," the Headmaster said, "with the captains of games. But I think I can assure you that next summer . . . If you show any form at all . . . Or even if you don't . . ."

"First Eleven Cricket Colours," whispered Otto, "make one a Blood. A Blood is allowed to walk on the grass in the Quad and use Bloods' Parlour at the tuck shop."

"Yes," breathed the Headmaster, "and to have all three buttons of his jacket undone and to put *both* hands in his trouser pockets and to walk arm in arm with all the other Bloods."

"Oh, sir . . ."

"So shall I arrange for you to spend your holidays here? And to stay on as a pupil among us? Shall I, Whitamore?"

"Please, sir," said Otto with tears of gratitude shining in his eyes, "oh please."

★

Faux Pas de Deux

" . . . Guy Burgess is wearing an Old Etonian tie. I know that it is not Mr. Macmillan because neither he nor I would perpetuate the social solecism of wearing an old school tie in Moscow."

Randolph Churchill in the Evening Standard

"How apt of the Prime Minister to choose to wear his Old Etonian tie on a night like this."

Christopher Dobson two days later in the Daily Express



After the Fast

IN more austere and probably happier days we used to look forward to Easter Day as that on which, after forty days of abstinence, we could again savour the full delights of chocolate and sweets.

To-day there is less abstinence and, partly for that reason, fewer peaks of enjoyment in the consumption of sweets. Fewer peaks—but the plateau of consumption in Britain is surprisingly high. It is in fact higher than anywhere else in the world. The British appetite for sweets is the most gargantuan of them all. Consumption leapt from around 400,000 tons, where it had been held by rationing until early 1953, to a cloying 620,000 tons in 1954. That jump was a reaction against rationing from which the British stomach was bound to recoil.

The recoil, however, has been astonishingly small. Translated in terms of consumption, per head of population—a far more realistic measuring gauge—the rise was from 5½ ounces a week in the final month of rationing to 8·9 ounces in 1954. From this there has been a decline to 8·3 ounces in 1958. This, without any question of statistical doubt, is the highest per capita figure in the world.

The British confectionery industry has more than adequate capacity to satisfy this appetite and in addition to export to the tune of over £1 million a year. It undertook large-scale investment after the end of sweet rationing and now has an embarrassing surplus of capacity. By going full out it could satisfy a consumption of more than 9 ounces per person per week.

The squeeze caused by this excess capacity is being put mainly on the comparatively small manufacturing companies that cannot afford the continuous advertising campaigns needed to maintain the consumption of the well-known standard brands. Another difficulty for the industry is the instability in the price of one of its main raw materials—cocoa.

Over the past five years it has fluctuated within the absurdly wide margin of £540 and £168 per ton. For any manufacturer forced to hold substantial stocks and unable or unwilling to cover his risk in the terminal market this represents a hostage to fortune which has in recent years caused grave damage and occasionally brought uncovenanted benefits to profit and loss accounts. The big chaps can stand it, and their shares offer the investor a stake in what looks like one of the stablest industries in the country. Here is a selection of shares, pure confectionery and mixed allsorts companies, which merits inclusion in any well-spread portfolio.

Among the undiluted confectionery manufacturers, whose business has been expanding recently, there is John Mackintosh and Sons, whose £1 shares at 67s. yield no more than 3 per cent—a flattering tribute to the high regard in which the company is held in investment circles. There is also Joseph Terry and Sons, whose net profits

doubled between 1955 and 1956 and have since held steady. Their 5s. shares at 11s. 6d. show a yield of nearly 7 per cent. Comparative newcomers to the Stock Exchange are Fryer and Co. of Nelson, of "jelly babies" fame. They are paying 20 per cent, and the 10s. shares at 22s. 6d. seem very reasonably priced.

Among the mixed undertakings there is the Beecham Group in which sweet production (Murray Mints, and in addition James Pascall, almost in the bag) is combined with the manufacturing of the wherewithal to cure the effect of over-indulgence. The shares only yield 3·3 per cent, but this is a group that has been growing fast.

Finally, there is Arthur Guinness and Sons, who now control Callard and Bowser, Williams Nuttall, Lavells, and Riley Bros., adding a sweet flavour to their brewery business. This is a diversification which adds to the attraction of the shares which at 60s. yield around 4½ per cent.

— LOMBARD LANE



In the Country

Japonicas and Mumbo-Jumbo

THE bane of all gardeners is that type of person who, when we have been talking of our japonica in all its spring glory, cannot restrain the remark, "I suppose you mean *Cydonia*; japonica, of course is an adjective."

Those who read the more serious kind of gardening books have ready a retort that will win game, set, and match. In an unassuming manner they explain that *Cydonia japonica* was once held to be the right name, but that botanists have now decided that this was wrong, and it is now *Chænomaes speciosa*: that is, not the Japanese quince but the "showy splitting-apple." They then add that *Chænomaes* is quite as absurd as *japonica*, for the name was coined under the misapprehension that the fruit, remotely apple-like, split into five parts to release the seed—which in fact it does not.

Most of us are too frightened of botanical nomenclature, and treat it

with undue respect. Are these scientific names (so often jaw-crackers, as the paeony, *mlokosiewiczii*) devised in a rational manner, as one would expect?

Alas!—no. The botanist is unconcerned with the appropriateness of a name. Under his rules the name attached to the first correctly published description of a plant must be its label. Thus, if by some mischance a shrub with small leaves and red flowers was named *Magnolia viridiflora*—"large-leaved and green-flowered"—at the time of its first official description, botanists would say "That is its correct name." It is no good arguing.

Holly is a good example. Owing to some misunderstanding it was in the early days labelled *Ilex*, which is the Latin name for the evergreen oak of the Mediterranean. When adding an epithet to distinguish our native kind the old experts chose *aquifolium*, the name the Romans gave to it. So, botanically, we now have *Ilex aquifolium*, no more than a meaningless symbol for that which decorates the Christmas pudding.

One must be honest and admit that the excuses put forward in defence of these misleading names sometimes tell us odd facts about the early history of a plant—but that has nothing to do with science. And, Q.E.D., neither can the rules of botanical nomenclature—at least, no more than the pot-luck that gives us our Jennifers and Peters. And perhaps I have said enough to enable you to cope with persons who say icily "Japonica?"

— MILES HADFIELD

AS we are going to be away for only a long week-end I suggest that it is hardly worth while bothering to tell the police. Surely nothing serious, like the time all the pipes unexpectedly froze and the boiler burst when we tried to light it, could happen at this time of year?

My husband asks if I have forgotten that unnerving Saturday when we were absent for only one night and I left the electric iron switched on? Also, didn't our last burglary take place when we were merely out for lunch?

Not our *last* burglary, I remind him. The last burglar was the one who drank the whisky and stole all the clocks and the clean laundry. The time when we went to Yorkshire and ran out of petrol during that frightful thunderstorm on the moors. He must be confusing it

FOR WOMEN

wasn't our cat. He says we had better tell the police in case the insurance company is unco-operative, but he doesn't want that something great dog rampaging all over the herbaceous border.

I assert that police dogs are invariably well-conducted and never rampage. It



that only a lunatic like Mrs. B. would have commandeered the services of a passing lorry-driver and asked him to do what he could. The man didn't even need a jemmy.

Yes, he *did*, I argue. That *was* the one who used the jemmy, like the one who got in by forcing the french windows. It was lucky, wasn't it, that the best man at the wedding had a spare pair of shoes and that they were only one size too small, and would my husband prefer to do his own packing?

This pointless question is ignored, and my husband announces that he will ring up the police if I will arrange to leave the key with the plumber. The plumber had better take a look round each evening in case the bathroom is flooded again.

But we must be fair, I tell him. None of the burglars was responsible for *that*; it was *years* ago, when our dear little boy turned on both bath taps and put the plug in just as we were leaving. But I agree that it is a good idea to leave the key and where shall we hide the silver this time? It was a nuisance that after burying it so carefully in the coal cellar the coke should have been delivered while we were still away. Unless the cold weather lasts for at least another month we still shan't be able to extricate the silver teapot. I also ask if he thinks it would be a good idea to bring down the contents of my bedroom and arrange them in the hall. It would save the frightful labour involved in clearing up my drawers and cupboards after any future burglar has done his worst. With the summer coming, the idea of replacing all my clothes at the expense of the insurance company has its attractions.

My husband replies, thoughtfully, with a faraway look in his eyes, that I may have got something there.

— BRENDA BROOKE

Shall We Tell the Police?

with the occasion when he shut the Jones's cat into the kitchen by mistake and they were so unreasonable about it. That was the burglar who ransacked my bedroom drawers just after I had finished spring-cleaning them. But at least he let the cat out of the kitchen, which I have always counted in his favour.

Oh, *that* time, says my husband; he recalls, very vividly, what I said about the burglar and adds that, after all, it

must have been the Jones's cat, thirsting for revenge, and how many shirts shall I pack?

My husband replies that as nothing appears to be sacred in our house he will take all his new shirts, and do I remember that wedding at Exeter when I forgot to pack any of his shoes? It was the week-end when we left the key with that futile Mrs. Broom and she got it stuck in the lock and gave way to raving hysteria. He remarks, bitterly,

Continuing Our Great New Romantic Serial

The Story So Far

Instalment IV: One Magic Night

Fate in the shape of a laundry parcel has reunited Gordon, rising young doctor and potholer, and Jasmyne Phrayle, blonde orphan with a new casual almond shirtwaist. But alas! next morning Gordon, whose friendship with the Mayfair beautician, though broken weeks ago, had led to Jasmyne's being fired by Mme. Belle Toujours after the episode of the delinquent with the bread-van, must go to Madeira and back as a ship's doctor. Jasmyne is consoled by memories of one magic night. In the Lakeland-bound train, summoned by a wire saying her dour widowed Uncle Jem for whom she formerly kept house has jumped off the roof to

escape the blackmailing hard-headed Mat who had pursued her for the money she is to inherit, she reflects tenderly on the little dinner at the Soho restaurant whose discreet lighting emphasized her small-waisted coffee organza and wonders if Mark, fit again from the dome falling on him, still wants to marry her. But Fate has a surprise in store. As the search party trails Uncle Jem's bloodstains to the river and dodges the shots of the now dangerous Mat, Jasmyne stumbles on the prone body of the delinquent's guardian, Colonel Stuart, elderly badger-watcher of shy charm.

Next Week: The Letter

Spring View from Kitchen Window

LET us give praise to husbands gardening,
Admire their strength and will-power as they go
Digging that trench until they've dug the thing,
Wheeling that wobbling barrow to and fro,
Bashing with rakes and chopping-off with shears,
Planting small fiddly plants in single file,
Uprooting whole great bushes by the ears.
And laying bricks and gravel by the mile.

O let us praise them as they slog away
So huge of boot, so earthy-gauntleted;
Let us rejoice to see them there, for they
Harbinge, nay, fashion, summer joys ahead!

Let us not say one word of what we feel
On how they come in late for every meal.

— ANGELA MILNE



Iron Maidens, Latest

THE cells were closely packed along a narrow corridor. The first I entered was barely six foot square and without windows. A dim electric light glowed in one corner. The victim was extended on a low couch, her face mercifully covered but her legs exposed to the attentions of a giant wardress.

"In this section we specialize in pinching and pummelling the flesh away," said my guide. "Here you see the manual method in use, but in more stubborn cases we apply the Giant Roller and, in the last resort" (here she lowered her voice), "the Traxator." I hardly dared inquire what the Traxator might be, but she seemed to read my thoughts (that, after all, was an important part of her work) and when we were once more in the corridor she explained that it was a machine like a vacuum cleaner which sucked up human flesh instead of dust.

In the next cell they specialized in electrocution—but no shock powerful enough to deal death was permitted. The refined agonies of Short-Wave Diathermy, Faradism and Galvanism were the lot of these wretches; while before my eyes was a creature almost naked and horribly emaciated, lying on an electrified couch from which a series of small shocks emanated.

We had yet to view sufferers from the ordeal by hot wax, boiling steam and infra-red light, but the worst was yet to come. The wardress took me round a corner and flung open a door at the end of the corridor. There in all its horror was the mediæval rack thinly disguised under the name of the Traction Rhythmic Couch. On it was stretched the victim enduring unimaginable agonies as the fiendish instrument slowly pulled vertebra from vertebra, joint from joint.

I turned away, sick and pale, and staggered for the door, gasping for the pure air of Bond Street. My mentor followed me and as I left I turned to her and said "Just tell me—what is it all for?" She raised a Firmo-Lifted brow and a slight pucker appeared upon her Vacuum-Sucked forehead. "But madam must have a long slim leg now that skirts are up for good."

— SUSAN CHITTY



"Show me the woman who says she simply does not CARE about the way she looks and I'll show you a woman who lies in her teeth . . ." —Beauty article in Sunday Express
What teeth?

Toby Competitions

No. 62—Challenge to Chancellor

KHRUSHCHEV has recently announced his intention of abolishing direct taxation. Assuming our Chancellor of the Exchequer has a similar intention, suggest alternative means of raising revenue. Limit 120 words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, April 10, to TOBY COMPETITION NO. 63, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 59

(All Aboard)

Competitors were asked to draft an advertisement for a Luxury Mystery Cruise lasting six months. There were a good many visits to Pluto's Underworld and trips that started from Cape Canaveral. Several competitors, having announced it was a Mystery Tour, proceeded to describe it in detail.

The winner by a short head is:

GRANVILLE GARLEY

15 DORIC AVENUE SOUTH
FRODSHAM, CHESHIRE

CHESTNUT GROVE



DRAWING-ROOM INANITIES

He. "I WONDER YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF GOING TO NICE AFTER THOSE TERRIBLE EARTHQUAKES!"

She. "OH, SURELY THOSE THINGS ALWAYS ARE CONFINED TO THE POORER QUARTERS OF THE TOWN!"

February 1 1896

WE HAVEN'T TOLD THE CAPTAIN YET

so even he won't know till D-day (*D* for Departure, *D* for Delight) when the sealed orders are opened and it's anchors aweigh for . . . who knows . . . perhaps Reykjavik in the fishing season (snap the Royal Navy in action) . . . over the Lost Horizon to Shangri-la . . . beyond the Mexique Bay to the Brave New World . . . in the wake of the *Marie Celeste* (all our lifeboats are guaranteed) . . . 8,644 times round Lake Windermere (calling for souvenirs at the Lakeside Gift Shop on alternate Fridays) . . . the Isles of the Blessed to find out about those songs the sirens really sang . . . the Pillars of Hercules . . . Clacton-on-Sea (no passports necessary) . . . rolling down to Rio . . . who knows . . . we don't yet . . . but we will . . . and so too we hope will you on D-day (*D* for Dreamboat, *D* for Departure).

Runners-up were:

The stupendous success of our first cruise with the M.S. *Benzedrine* for those who do not know the world prompted us to arrange a further cruise with the s.s. *Mescalin* for those who do not wish to know. This was an even greater success.

For those who do know, we plan a six months' Mystery Cruise on the t.s.s. *Panacea* with every luxury of the chef and pharmacist. Undoubtedly the success of our cruise will again depend on the guest explorers, psychiatrists and lawyers who will accompany us. You need no training to exploit the mysterious places we shall visit and the varied society on board. Our professional advisers are there to rescue you from any situation, physical, emotional, legal or political, dead or alive.

Inquiries to Wolf Bros., Gold Street, W.1.—Mrs. Sylvia J. Beare, 12 Tyndall Avenue, St. Michael's Hill, Bristol, 2
SAILING FROM TANGIER, Oct. 3rd. The Motor Yacht *Denise*,

280 tons, under CAPTAIN DONOGAN O'FLAHERTY and two officers with hand-picked crew. Owner William B. Glockenheimer (U.S.A.)

AVAILABLE. Accommodation Two only passengers who are invited participate in SIX MONTHS' LUXURY CRUISE. Wonderful food, French cook, steward. Wines, Music, Library, Fishing, etc. Opportunity meet owner and four other passengers before booking.

COURSE. Decided by owner in consultation with captain. Passengers may be informed at OWNER'S DISCRETION. Party may be assured of interesting cruise, visiting many quiet ports, with occasional sorties on unfrequented shores where safe landing may be had.

CARGO. A small cargo may be carried.

GUESTS. Owner reserves right entertain occasional private guests. COST. It is desired to attract persons of good social standing. The provisional fare of £820 may be reduced for those having high rank and known integrity.

WRITE BOX K. 376. *Mark Denise*.—Peter Gardner, New House, Easthampton, Kingsland, Leominster, Herefordshire

PHILPOTT'S LUXURY MYSTERY CRUISES

(Fees paid on return)

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO is to board an airliner in the Mystery Airport near Hampstead Heath. Settle down comfortably, for who knows where you may be this time next day? Will you be dropped on to a royal barge as a distinguished guest on a cruise down the Ganges? Or on to a submarine about to circumnavigate the world? Or a Chinese junk on the track of pirates? Or will you be dropped with some companions on to a small though luxurious ship which, although manned by Britishers, is actually exploring one of the principal Martian canals?

NOBODY KNOWS. BUT ONE THING IS CERTAIN—it will be a holiday to remember for its spice of adventure!—*Miss Alice Browne* (10 years 6 months), 29 Pembroke Road, London, London, W.8

Do you feel "let down" on the first day after your holiday? For you, then, Mariner Lines announce the vacation that takes you away from it all . . . and makes you glad to be back!

Are food and drink beginning to bore you? Do you shun a crowd? Our SIX-MONTH MYSTERY CRUISE offers the perfect solution, the ultimate luxury of absolute isolation! . . . Picture yourself idling the bright days away on waters as smooth as a painted ocean, with only the lone albatross for company! No shuffleboard, no gala nights . . . your serenity undisturbed by a service discreet as phantoms!

We promise that you will return with an entirely new outlook . . . and what a tale to tell!

Make your reservations now—to-morrow may be too late!—for the CRUISE that will be a turning-point and talking-point in your life!—David Leslie, 57 Glenmore Road, Hampstead, N.W.3

One guinea book-tokens to the above and also to: *Miss Claire Dockrell*, 249 Abington Avenue, Northampton; *J. P. Pinel*, 67 Horn Park Lane, Lee, London, S.E.12



BOOKING OFFICE

Not the Same Thing at All

The Use of Imagination. Educational Thought and the Literary Mind. William Walsh. Chatto and Windus, 25/-

The Public School in the New Age. George Snow. Bles, 12/6

To Sir, With Love. E. R. Braithwaite. Bodley Head, 13/6

THE only thing that these authors have in common is that they are writing about education, a degree of isolation one would hardly find in three books on medicine or law or theology. Without some convergence in the literature of a subject you get not a healthy diversity but muddle.

For Professor Walsh, "To appreciate and to make fine—but always relevant—distinctions is the mark of an educated mind. And the subtler the distinctions, the better the mind." Mr. Snow's education is a matter of communal service, unselfish leadership, and vigour in active pursuits. Mr. Braithwaite has the greatest sense of urgency. To him education is struggling in the pitifully few terms available to save children from the prejudices of their parents before they become "set" by the fight to survive in a hostile world. He is a negro from British Guiana who took a science degree and became a specialist in electronics. After demobilization from the R.A.F. he could not get any job in Britain until he became a teacher under the L.C.C., apparently without any training, and was given the tough top class of a secondary modern school. After a little preliminary trouble—quelled, though he does not seem quite to realize this, by an exceptionally strong personality—the filthy language in school died down; some of the girls began to wash; school time was used in preparation for the imminent winning of a living in a harsh neighbourhood instead of in day-dreaming over "dates."

Professor Walsh would say, I think, that he is concerned with moulding opinion in an élite which

will, possibly at several removes, influence what actually happens in schools. He assumes the existence of a teaching profession that reads closely and critically. He derives his educational doctrine from Coleridge and Arnold and Dr. Leavis and his book is likely to be as much a classic of literary criticism as of educational theory; but, although nothing must detract from a plain statement of admiration for it, I must admit that, while he particularizes in his comments on the actual words used by the poets or novelists he quotes, everything else is generalized. The same abstract nouns occur repeatedly. One is aware of the constant presence of the concepts of growth, childhood and learning but there is no feel of children or teachers or classes. All the examples come from literature, none from life.

Mr. Snow's ideal public school masters would never have time to read in Professor Walsh's sense, or, indeed, in any other, as he boasts that they will work fifteen hours a day seven days a week in term and spend a good deal of



the holidays on running camps and conducting tours. His brisk defence of the modern public school, which at times has the winning certainty of a prospectus, paints an attractive picture of a closed community in which, at every stage of the day, a profusion of choices face the boy. Mr. Snow rebuts the stock charges of snobbery, brutality and narrowness. His chief criticism is that the new rich are driving the old professional classes out of the public schools. Although he is anxious that the intensive boarding-school life of busy societies and communal activities for the benefit of the school should be available to suitable entrants from the State System, his most heartfelt recommendations are matters of income-tax law. Mr. Snow admits that some of the better known schools do not fit his picture and he is not concerned with day-schools at all. How many public schools do really share his aims, apart from his own, where I once enjoyed watching the impact of his first enthusiasm as a headmaster? I remember him

as gayer than he lets himself be in print. A more serious admission is that if the public schools are to be so busy with out-of-school activities they must be content to cede their tradition of learning to the grammar schools, accepting that making pots or clearing ditches or prompting a school play is preferable to reading Aeschylus in the original or trying to reach the standard of a Trinity scholarship in mathematics or any other intellectual activity that requires prolonged attention. Mr. Snow's ideal public school is essentially a middle school: the virtues of the traditional sixth form are ignored.

Mr. Braithwaite's educational principles started, healthily enough, from his own wounds. Mr. Snow would start, I think, from a strong, unargued conviction that quantity of activity is a good thing in itself, though in one direction he probably derives from Baden-Powell and in another from Sir Percy Nunn. Professor Walsh starts from the

POETS' CORNER



4. JOHN BETJEMAN



position first stated by Dr. Leavis, to which his own book would make a lucid and persuasive introduction. It is sad that these writers will probably never read one another.

— R. G. G. PRICE

NEW FICTION

Nabokov's Dozen. Vladimir Nabokov. Heinemann, 15/-

On the evidence of this book alone it could be inferred that Mr. Nabokov is one of the most naturally gifted of living writers. These thirteen stories display varying facets of an extraordinarily versatile talent, ranging from the romantic-nostalgic to the funny-anecdotal, with side-glances at science-fiction and a kind of surreal poetry recalling that of Jules Supervielle. Many are extremely amusing, a few are macabre, and all are excessively readable. Best, perhaps, are the evocations of childhood, which reveal a Proustian sensibility tempered by a wry, Thurber-like self-mockery. *First Love*, for example, seems an almost deliberate echo of the *Jeunes Filles en Fleur*, yet the story has a glancing, elusive wit which belongs wholly to Nabokov himself. In somewhat similar vein is *Mademoiselle O*, a small masterpiece which contrives to be at once genuinely moving and exceedingly funny. It should perhaps be added, in view of the fuss over *Lolita*, that this book is about as pornographic as *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*.

— J. B.

The Marvellous Boy. Hamilton Macallister. Hamish Hamilton, 13/6

As in Mr. Macallister's first novel, we are back with the D-stream at a secondary grammar school in a grim northern town, though the general climate is much less hilarious and the viewpoint shifted from first person to third. Mostly the story and characters are presented from the angle of the young music-mistress (already, perhaps, hardening into permanent spinsterhood, though the faintly amorous art master wishes to paint her in the nude) who befriends and advances an unpopular pupil with unexpected

emotional repercussions when he is recognized as a budding genius. Unfortunately the personality of Gisby remains largely an enigma, though doubtless his remote attitude is intended to represent the isolation of the artist-in-embryo; and the sort of music he composes is difficult for the reader to imagine. The counter-influence exerted over him by the chemistry and cricket master (surely an unlikely combination) is not clearly defined either; but the author himself possesses formidable latent powers which even the fashionable mist of futility that blurs occasionally the sharp outlines of his scenes cannot wholly obscure: though he seems badly in need of new basic material on which to exercise them.

— J. M-R.

The Tournament. Peter Vansittart. Bodley Head, 15/-

The Middle Ages appear, to posterity, like a series of tiny pictures in a missal. Their perspective and proportions are endearingly naive, their colours are heraldic and intense. Grotesque and cruel and chivalrous and touching, they have a compelling magic about them. It is this magic that Mr. Vansittart has attempted to recapture. His new novel centres on a ducal tournament in France: the Duke's son is betrothed to the Countess of Trévers, who then promises to marry Rainault, Prince of Utrecht. The Duke, insulted, challenges the Prince to personal combat; but such is circumstance that Duke and tournament assume a greater significance, and become symbolic in the story of chivalry. Mr. Vansittart treats this exciting theme like a painter, touching his scenes in with scarlet and gold and blue. There is much to commend *The Tournament*. And yet I must confess that I found the style a little too intricate, a little too like translation, a trifle too self-conscious.

— J. R.

The Poorhouse Fair. John Updike. Gollancz, 15/-

This rather symbolical little tale is set a trifle into the future. A Home for the

Aged in New Jersey is holding its annual fair, and snatches of conversation and action throughout the day reveal the relationship of the characters to one another, to history, and to the purpose of life. The writing is dense and careful but at times suddenly shoots from the portentous into the brilliant. Some of the scenes—for instance one where the inmates suddenly stone the benevolent careerist at the head of the institution—have a Beckett-like seamy dementia. The visitors to the gala illustrate various prospects of national degeneration in the years ahead. I am not quite sure how far my tepid response to this work of ambitious craftsmanship is due to its Americaness, to the fact that trends which for the author are immediately menacing seem to the British reader remote and irrelevant and are certainly neither clearly established nor universalized in the book.

— R. G. G. P.

Other New Books

On My Own. Eleanor Roosevelt. Hutchinson, 21/-

The material that Mrs. Roosevelt uses for this account of her activities since President Roosevelt's death may well have served already for her newspaper column and her lectures, but it has been skilfully knitted into a book, whose author disarms her stunned audience by sudden collapses of her own ego.

She is free-spoken in her opinions of American politics and politicians, but discreet on what must be the equally fascinating internal politics of the Roosevelt family. When she campaigned for Governor Stevenson the Boston *Globe* sent a reporter to string along with her, and expose her schedule as a Democratic exaggeration impossible to carry out. Girls from Fleet Street, who had the same assignment during Mrs. Roosevelt's war-time visit to London, will not be surprised to hear that he limped home discomfited after a few days, while she triumphantly carried out her campaign schedule, fortified, she tells us, with chocolate-covered garlic pills to improve her memory. The book ends with an account of a few rounds she boxed with Mr. Khrushchev, and we are left with the feeling that the heart Mrs. Roosevelt wears on her sleeve is large and warm.

— V. P.

The March Wind. Desmond Donnelly. Collins, 18/-

Decent M.P.s, travelling about the world pointing out those things that are wrong and susceptible of amelioration, can do much to fill the gap left by the disappearance—for grievous economic reasons—of the British spinster on "the Continent" who, before World War I, made so deep an impression on the mind and literature of Europe. Seemingly almost neuter, yet suspected by the bad among the foreigners of unavowed passions; profoundly convinced that the British Way of Life was the only good

way, yet warm-heartedly sympathetic with those abroad who were prevented, by their own natures or their Governments, from following it; she was a figure ridiculed for her insularity yet truly and rightly reverenced for the clarity of her beliefs as to what humanity ought or ought not to be up to.

Mr. Donnelly has travelled thousands upon thousands of miles behind the Iron Curtain—in Czechoslovakia, Russia, Manchuria, China—and has felt a very proper disapproval of much that he has seen. His book is a valuable and often moving record of the impression those territories make upon a home-loving British politician. To some extent the book is the victim of its author's honesty and firm principle. For a good deal of it is inevitably a record of important conversations which could not be held because this or that important person would not speak to Mr. Donnelly, and of annoying brushes with policemen and other obstructors ignorant of what is due to democratic representatives abroad.

Between the lines, however, much of interest is to be gleaned and—when the author from time to time feels justified in relaxing his firm grip of the obvious—a lively mind is glimpsed, alertly at work.

—C. C.

CREDIT BALANCE

The Bones of the Wajingas. Denys Roberts. Methuen, 15/- A hilarious account of a visit by a do-gooding M.P. to an African colony, as topical as it is funny.

The Age of Firearms. Robert Held. Cassell, 50/. A gorgeously-produced and luxuriously-illustrated history of firearms, from their ancestors the sling and the catapult to the modern bolt-action rifle. A real collectors' volume.

AT THE PLAY

Les Femmes Savantes (PRINCES)

MANY of the audience at last week's Comédie Française production were clearly grateful for the comic aunt (*tante comique?*) played by Andrée de Chauveron, who had similarly delighted many the week before in the Feydeau farce, with her funny deaf woman (*femme sourde drôle?*). Crumpled old spinsters, panting after everything in pants, loose a universal flow of fun which no language barrier can ban, as do deaf old ladies smiling benignly at unheard abuse.

But whereas the Feydeau was rich in

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

An exhibition of fifty years of *Punch* cinema cartoons and caricatures is on view at the Streatham Gaumont, by arrangement with the Rank Organisation.

The "Punch in the Theatre" Exhibition is at Colchester Repertory Theatre until April 3.

this kind of intelligibility—beds, bed-rooms and matrimonial mix-ups being the same in all tongues—this particular Molière is considerably less so. Could I be right in thinking that the audience (apart from the hard core of expatriate French) hadn't a clue, for most of the evening, what was going on? That a sudden ray of light, such as Chrysale's ringing "*Vous avez raison*," earned immoderate laughter from the whole house which smacked more of relieved recognition than of delicious *rappart*? Certainly not. *Fi donc!* The suggestion

REP SELECTION

Bristol Old Vic, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, until April 4th.
Library Theatre, Manchester, *My Three Angels*, until April 11th.
Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, *Dear Delinquent*, until April 18th.
The Playhouse, Liverpool, *Macbeth*, until April 11th.

is lowbrow, unworthy and subjective. No reputable critic would hint at anything of the kind.

Les Femmes Savantes is a small satire on bogus intellectuals, mainly female, and its difficulties are intensified by affectations of phrasing and mannerisms of speech designed to make in detail the general point. Although this production (by Jean Meyer) is described as new, it nevertheless takes no liberties with the revered author, and retains the air of a beloved and traditional dramatic exercise:

the impression is that the Molière devotee will eagerly await the peaks—Trissotin's poetry reading to the besotted blue stockings, or the long tirade against intellectual pretentiousness by Clitandre—much as we await the great set-pieces of Shakespeare. But the plot, despite an appearance of substance in the programme notes, is frail and contrived, and the play's merits must rest in the words that clothe it; these are mostly in rhyming couplets of a somewhat monotonous fall, and are relieved by very little movement about the stage. Oh, all is impeccably done in the classic style (*cela va sans dire*), but the occasion chiefly strikes a blow for our own Old Vic and Stratford directors who are so often belaboured for giving us "producer's Shakespeare," and suggests that they know very well what they are doing and why. Even *Hamlet*, rendered as a series of immaculate recitations in one very square-box set, might be a little hard to take. Especially (at any rate for me) in French.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

A promising first play by Peter Shaffer, *Five Finger Exercise*, about the emotional impact of a German tutor on an English home (23/7/58); another good piece of writing, *Two for the See-Saw*, with only Peter Finch and Gerry Judd (24/12/58); it is impossible to avoid mentioning again Arthur Watkin's splendid whodunit *Not in the Book*, with Wilfrid Hyde White (16/4/58).

—J. B. BOOTHROYD



Belise—ANDRÉE DE CHAUVERON

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[*Les Femmes Savantes*
Trissotin—JACQUES SEREYS]

AT THE PICTURES

The Journey—Whirlpool

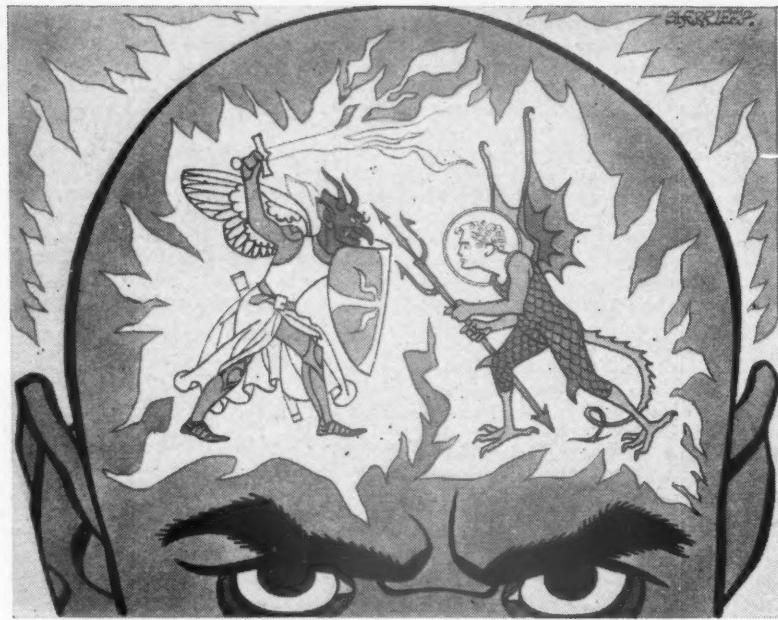
IT may seem questionable to use the Hungarian tragedy of 1956 as the basis of a glossy, expensive colour-film in which everything—scenes, episodes, incidents, characters, plot development, stars, everything—has quite obviously qualified for inclusion by reason of its tested, infallible box-office appeal. Nevertheless *The Journey* (Director: Anatole Litvak) is exceedingly well done, and deserves praise for that.

The story is founded on the old all-in-the-same-boat formula: collect a lot of characters with nothing in common (indeed, make them as diverse as possible) except the fact that they are all for a time in the same difficulty in the same place, and see how they react. Here they are a plane-load of travellers stranded in Budapest just when the rising has been crushed. There is no civilian air transport: they pile into a bus for Vienna, but are held up by the Russians in a small town near the frontier, where they camp in the local hotel. This, in fact, is the scene of most of the action, which is largely concerned with the Russian major (Yul Brynner) who is the military boss of the place.

Mr. Brynner is allowed to make him much more than the conventional Russian of Hollywood fiction, and in several scenes is able to convey a real sense of the anger and exasperation of an intelligent professional soldier up against something he does not understand. He is not a natural oppressor and much resents the fact that duty puts him in the position of one. An effective scene shows him wildly, desperately forcing the gaiety of an evening at the hotel in an attempt to break the travellers' hostility towards him.

But the basically conventional (and box-office) structure of the story has to imply that his main concern is with one beautiful woman member of the party (Deborah Kerr). Suspense arises from the fact of her own obvious anxiety about a mysterious fellow-traveller who we very soon realize is a wounded Hungarian trying to slip out of the country. Will the major find this out? If he does, will the other travellers suffer for not telling him before?

The travellers, as I say, are carefully assorted. Robert Morley as a more or less comic Englishman has the job of relaxing the tension at intervals; several of the others are able to make a memorable impression, notably Anne Jackson as an American wife worried about her small children. The chief fault of the piece is a tendency to obvious melodramatics in the dialogue. Somebody, I think it was Arnold Bennett, observed that under the stress of strong emotion people do in fact tend to speak in the old melodramatic clichés; but for them to do so in a story makes it less, not more

[*The Journey*

Major Surov—YUL BRYNNER

convincing. Nevertheless as a whole this is very well worth seeing.

Watching *Whirlpool* (Director: Lewis Allen) I was continually distracted by oddities in the colour photography. Some of it, particularly the straightforward views of town and country along the banks of the Rhine between Cologne and Strasburg, is splendidly beautiful; the trouble is that so many of these magnificent pictures have to suffer from the very obvious superimposition of foreground figures photographed at a different time. Regrettably often, these figures do literally resemble cut-outs pasted on to a background: there is something like a line round them. If the story were really gripping, this wouldn't matter, but it is rather an empty little pursuit melodrama. William Sylvester is a crook on the run after stabbing a man in a café, Juliette Greco is his girl; she gets on to a tanker going down the Rhine, he follows along the bank. The captain of the tanker (O. W. Fischer) is attracted, the wife (Muriel Pavlow) of his crew-man (Marius Goring) is jealous, and there are predictably violent consequences. It is plain that the visual appeal of all this is really meant to carry it, and a great deal of it, I repeat, is beautiful to look at; but I found those photographic artificialities too distracting.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London there are promising new

ones I have not yet been able to see, notably *The Sound and the Fury*; review of this next week. The Greek *A Matter of Dignity* (11/3/59) should not be missed. *Room at the Top* (4/2/59) may still be available. Good though not unfamiliar fun in *Carlton-Browne of the F.O.* (18/3/59). *Gigi* (18/2/59) continues, and the revived classic *La Grande Illusion* with *March to Aldermaston* ("Survey," 25/2/59).

Best of the releases I think is *Separate Tables* (25/2/59), very good indeed. I quite liked *The Black Orchid* ("Survey," 18/3/59), and I didn't like *Auntie Mame* ("Survey," 21/1/59).

— RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE BALLET

Ludmilla Tcherina Theatre Ballet
(CAMBRIDGE THEATRE)
Coppelia (COVENT GARDEN)

THE proverbial shoe-string might have been more profitable to the artistic aspirations of Ludmilla Tcherina than the eighty million francs which, we are told, were spent on "some of the most sensational staging ever seen in the theatre." So far from "shaking ballet out of its traditional apathy" Miss Tcherina's revolutionary ideas result in our getting no more than tantalizing glimpses of her quality as a dancer. We perceive, however, that she has notable beauty and symmetry of face and figure. She has, too, an impressive speaking voice. Bringing stage and

cinema techniques to the aid of the ballet and importing to that end directors in those fields of the eminence of Jean Renoir, Raymond Rouleau and Jean Marc Thibault, and using deafening stereophonic sound-effects, may represent Miss Tcherina's aim of "total theatre." For the dancers it came near to total eclipse for all thirty of them.

The Lovers of Teruel, based on a mediaeval precursor of *I Pagliacci*, to effective music by Mikis Theodorakis, is memorable for its setting by Jacques Dupont rather than for its choreography by Milko Sparreblek or its direction by Mr. Rouleau. Street players perform their tragedy by the side of a railway cutting. Trains thunder by in the evening gloom, accentuating dramatic climax; and in the distance and over an iron foot-bridge dim lights glimmer through distant murk and smoke. It is a setting at once realistically sinister and poetically imaginative for the familiar theme of personal tragedy breaking through the make-believe. It ends with Miss Tcherina leaping to death from the bridge as a train approaches. Mr. Sparreblek and Vassili Sulich, as husband and lover, make a vivid impact in the few moments in which they are allowed to hold one's eye. Miss Tcherina likewise shows flashes of compulsive power.

Dame Ninette de Valois having refused hitherto to allow pupils of the Royal Ballet School to give public or even semi-public displays presented ninety of them in *Coppelia* with stunning effect. It might easily have been mistaken for a performance by the fully-fledged Royal Ballet. The three principal parts were danced by recently graduated pupils. Antoinette Sibley fulfilled expectation with a gay and intelligent performance as Swanilda, the mischievous ringleader of the girls who invade the workshop of Dr. Coppélius. As the old toymaker Lambert Cox gave a truly remarkable performance. In the part of Swanilda's wooer, Franz, Graham Usher confirmed the promise of his recent appearances in smaller roles. The ensembles by the school *corps de ballet* went with professional verve. Robyn Croft danced the Aurora solo with charming aplomb, and Deanne Bergsma gave a performance of Prayer which I am inclined to rank next to that of Beryl Grey, its best exponent in the Royal Ballet. — C. B. MORTLOCK

ON THE AIR

Musical Morons

SPEAKING, as I can, for the tone-deaf, I do not feel that the BBC is doing right by us. I do not mean by "tone-deaf" the unhappy few who cannot tell a shriek from a groan, but the enormous regiment of listeners for whom music is a mystery. We like the noise

when it's not too squeaky; some of us can recognize simple tunes and try to sing them in the vain hope that someone else will recognize them; we can often make an intelligent guess at the date of a particular piece; but play us something mildly complex and then something else rather like it and we won't know if you've really only played the same thing twice; all the mechanics of music—symphonic structure, diminished fifths and that caper—are behind a veil, and anything written in our lifetime is behind several; finally, we feel such fools that we don't like to talk about our failings, and for this reason I think that there are a lot more of us than anyone recognizes.

What we want is education. I am not asking for concerts to be broadcast with a running commentary ("... and that thing going oom-pa-pa-paah in the background looks like a bassoon from here, and I think he must be fiddling round with bits of the main theme. And now, by Jove, what's this? I believe it is the second subject—yes it is the second subject and it's working up to a positively tremendous climax. Just listen to all that brass. Perhaps you would like to hear what Sir Adrian thinks about that . . ."). But there are several regular concert programmes that are basically educational but seem ashamed of it.

"Music to Remember" is a good example. Time was when this programme seemed just about right, apart from its title, which suffers from the same sort of dynamic obsolescence as an American refrigerator; they seem to be finding it harder to choose music that is, strictly, memorable. In the old days the musician who introduced the programme would tell us why he liked whatever was about to be played, illustrating particular points by having the orchestra perform suitable snatches of the work before they buckled down to the whole thing. They found an excellent formula for balancing the pedagogic nature of the programme with the personality of the compère. Nowadays this doesn't seem to happen any more. The educational note is still there, but the education is much vaguer and less helpful. If we are going to have it, let it be overt. Concealment is both irritating and wasteful.

There is another form of concealed education about which I am even more doubtful. Inevitably these days the Light Programme consists largely of background music to do the laundry to. But the authorities seem to be using this as ground-

bait; suddenly, in the middle of some meaningless medley from Bournemouth, there is a persuasive voice telling listeners all about the Tibetan revolt for five minutes, and then back we go to Bournemouth. I doubt if this curious sort of inverted commercial can do much good.

This is also true, I think, of attempts to raise the public's taste by giving them something a little bit better than they asked for. Presumably the organizers of "Family Favourites" get a wide enough variety of requests for them to stage almost any shade of programme they feel like. The pleasantly relaxed voices of Jean Metcalfe and Bill Crozier exchanging endless addresses produce a nice "democratic" effect. But I imagine the choice of records is very carefully edited, so that along with the husky songs about mother and the brown-windsor baritones exchanging confidences with God there is at least one record of "good" music, which may conceivably hook a few low-brow fishes up to higher things. Jack Train's resolutely middle-middle-brow "Just for You" is even more suspect in this way. He manages to sound embarrassed by the music he plays, as though it were not really English to like anything so arty.

Incidentally, why are there not more disc-jockey programmes on the Light? Nothing as elaborate as "Desert Island Discs," enjoyable and illuminating though that usually is (but can't they have fewer records and play them right through?). I would have thought that there was room for several young men chatting casually away and playing records from time to time. The tone ought to be roughly that of Alastair Cooke. Why not try him for a start? It would make a change.

— PETER DICKINSON



Motor If You Must

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

Further studies of how it feels to be one of 9,000,000 motorists

WORLD population problems—their restatement, that is, rather than their solution—are frequently the source of an honest day's work for statisticians, but announcements that there will be another 2,000,000 Chinese around by next Easter leave those of us who are around already surprisingly unmoved (unless, perhaps, we are Chinese). If the statisticians really want to impress I recommend them to get their best seers on to the problems of world motor-car population and distribute their findings widely. "Where is it all going to end?" is the cry constantly going up from the detached observer in Fifth Avenue, Oxford Street, the Place de la Concorde and the Kurfürstendamm; if the mathematicians would only get cracking and tell them, it would be a valuable inducement to the prospective motorist to abandon his plans and put his money into public transport, where it would be more than welcome. The railways need this financial support just to tide them over another lean decade or so. Then the day will dawn when, simultaneously, in all towns of more than two hundred thousand inhabitants (or more than five thousand if the day happens to be a Saturday) the cars of the world will finally coagulate and every railway station will be besieged by footsore ex-motorists, offering fantastic sums at the booking-office for the privilege of standing in the guard's van as far as Chicago, one of the Hartlepools, Fontainebleau, Tashkent, or wherever they've got to get to for a vital business lunch.

People who have slipped into the easy habit of being funny about, testy with, or rude to, the railway official, wherever he may be, might care to ponder this and change their ways while there is still time. A well-disposed outside

porter at Marylebone could be a powerful ally on coagulation day.

I wish to make it clear once again that I am not trying to dissuade you, sir or madam, from your ambition for personal wheels. I merely state the facts and venture on a few simple conclusions. If, on the principle that there is always room for a little one, you decide to proceed, flouting the well-known test-case of the man loading straw on a camel, please do so. As a last possible deterrent I might throw out the information that there were 319,574 successful prosecutions for motoring offences in 1950*, and that the proportion of these brought for infringements of parking regulations is such as to stagger anyone who can find out exactly what it was. It is a truth long recognized by psychologists that a man buying a car sees himself riding in it. The fact is, however, that he rides in it hardly at all. It has been estimated that the average motor-car, for every hour spent in motion—for the purchase of this calculation stationary throbbing in a jam outside Somerset House counts as motion—spends six and a half days at rest, three of which are spent parked, if you're lucky. I leave it to the economists to reckon up the dead loss here, in terms of depreciation, leaking licence and insurance money and possibly oil, parking fees, cost of spraying-out "Bert loves Olive" scratched on the boot by an anonymous informant, theft of hub-caps, etc., and pass on to the state of mind of the owner as he sits distract in his office, doodling policemen's helmets on his blotter. To the dedicated pedestrian there is a deceptive air of finality to the slam the motorist gives his door as he leaves it for the day and

sets out on the mile-and-a-half walk to work. But the slam is actually saying "Prosecute and be damned." The motorist is at the end of his tether. His tongue is hot and ashamed with cursing. He has been trying to park for just under seventy minutes, driving twice up and down the Embankment from Blackfriars to Westminster; once, on an ill-advised hunch, up into Whitehall Court and back; three times, in desperation, into the mad, truck-ridden wasteland of Upper Thames Street. These may seem bizarre haunts for the man whose daily bread is earned just off Waterloo Place, but he once tried parking round there, and after three hours went openly to a policeman and tried to give himself up, with the proviso that his car should be towed away and impounded. To-day, then, he leaves it at last just off the Borough vegetable market with its back end, a palpable danger to navigation, sticking out into Southwark Street. And all day he sits at his desk, doodling helmets, steeling himself to go back, as go back he must, and discover the worst.

One of the mysteries of parking, whether brazenly in the street or cautiously in a park, is that the exact number of motorists needed to fill the space available always gets there before you do. The mystery is heightened by the fact that this is the common experience. Ask anyone. Who, then, are the owners of all these cars, nose-to-tail in the gutters, packed like a mosaic on the bomb-sites? Nobody knows. One explanation not lightly to be ruled out is that they are the property of the British Transport Executive, whose planners, not the fools we take them for, have chosen this method to reconvert motorists everywhere to rail and bus. Whether this is true or not, no one will know until a question about it is asked in the House. If then.

*For later figures get in touch with someone having a more up-to-date reference library.



4 Parking It

Problems of car disposal in other parts of Britain than London have their bright side, though not for the motorist. It is the Urban District Council official in charge of parking who passes many a happy hour with the town plan and a blue pencil, ensuring that visitors to the town shall have their full money's-worth of interest and excitement. The result of his work—apart from patenting it and putting it on the Christmas market as a challenging rival to snakes-and-ladders—is a delightful *tour de ville* for the motorist who has decided that he can just spare half an hour here for a quick lunch. He has no sooner entered the cobbled High Street, looking anxiously for a sign saying "TO CAR PARK," than he sees one and rejoices, turning sharp right into a narrow alley full of delivery vans and gasmen with the road up; there is no car park, but

at the end of the street is a sign saying "TO CAR PARK" and inviting him to turn sharp left into a gay and bustling vegetable market, through which he drives slowly over the dropped fruit until he spots a sign saying "TO CAR PARK," where he forks half-right into a street of blackened terraced houses, where little children play hop-scotch, bowl bricks, twirl hula-hoops and put their tongues out at him. The next half-dozen signs take him into a wide perimeter sweep of the town, through unexpected outcrops of light industry, where lorries full of old bedsteads appear suddenly and in reverse from unsuspected yards, until at last, bearing obediently left at the waterworks and hairpinning at the cemetery, he comes upon his goal. This is usually the site of a building that has been demolished but not taken away; even as he feels the

first half-bricks under his wheels a man comes out of a hut, whistling and rubbing his hands, to prop up a sign saying "CAR PARK FULL."

You will find it invaluable, as a fledgling motorist, to form some sort of assessment of the official mind: the mind that demands a two-page affidavit every time you want a driving licence, that installs traffic-lights to save policemen and puts a policeman in charge of them, that expects you, in a thronged shopping-centre with a fire-engine behind you, to know at any second whether the date is even or odd, that signposts both forks of a forked road "Chesterfield," that asserts in your log-book that your car is driven by ICE, that declares a speed limit wherever there are street lamps and fixes signs on the lamps to show that there isn't one, that—but the list is long, and space



"We've run out of petrol, Miss Sangster."



is short. My point is that the man who comes out of a car-park hut, known for purposes of convenience as the attendant, is this mind in miniature and microcosm, and as such well rewarding of study. It is true that his position is lowly; he is, in fact, to the great world of the motor-car as the cinema usherette is to the great world of the film; and just as she basks in the overspill of celebrity radiance, with arch poses and languid condescension, so the car-park attendant stands full panoplied with the reflected authority of the Ministry of Transport, the Mayor and Corporation, the Road Traffic Acts, the by-laws, the Chief Constable, the Crown, and anyone else who suits his inflated fancy.

To show this he wears a special hat.

People who have seen a municipal car-park attendant without his hat say that he looks absolutely nothing. Just an irritable old man with a moustache, and his waistcoat done up on the wrong buttons. With the hat on he is transformed. It has magic properties. For one thing, it entitles him to a shilling for merely showing it round the door of

the hut, though the closely printed ticket he hands you, in exchange for your submission to superfluous instruction on how to make a car steer to one side or the other, clearly states that he is entitled to nothing of the kind. For another, particularly in open or non-hutted parks, it invests him with the power of dematerialization. Motorists with time on their hands have hunted through parks of two and three hundred cars before now, even going so far as to peer under the chassis of each, and would be willing to testify that there was no attendant to be seen. But as they made to walk off, confident that for once their shilling was safe, the sound of tearing paper fell on their ears and with it, in a bronchitic rasp, the words "Colder to-day." The magic hat stood not a yard away.

Never cross one of these men. They have the "CAR PARK FULL" board ever ready, and it is useless for you to point to a selection of sixteen spaces; they can simply point to the board. Call a policeman and you only double the number of special hats. As with the

larger official mind, there is nothing you can do but bow to the superior forces of officialdom. There is on record a case of a man who bested a car-park attendant, and in no less remote a spot than Land's End. He had thought to revisit the scene of a childhood holiday there, wandering on the wild escarpment alone with his thoughts; but as he came within sight of his destination, with only a few hundred yards between himself and the sea, he saw instead a sea of motor-cars, the Last Car-Park in England, with the Last Car-park Attendant striding out to meet him, officially semaphoring. Sickened, the motorist put his wheel hard over, turned a full circle and drove away, whipping his imagination mercilessly in an attempt to savour the chagrin of the man in the special hat. He insists that there was no possible connection between this incident and the two flat tyres he found some hours later when he returned to his car after lunching in Penzance. But students of the official mind know better.

Next week: Signs and Surfaces

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